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THE LIFE

OF THE REV.

JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF;

WITH

PORTIONS OF HIS CORRESPONDENCE.

EDITED BY

JOHN HAMILTON THOM.

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PART III.

[Continued.]

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE.

CHAPTER III.

[Continued.]

EXTRACTS FROM JOURNALS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

1833.—Ætat. 58.

JAN. 15. Left Dublin at seven in the morning: at Holyhead at half-past three in the afternoon.

Wednesday, 16th. Passed the Menai Bridge; the weather beautiful, and the view glorious.

What a poem might be written! There was a day when that disruption of the mountain was made.—The state of the globe then;—the monument of human ingenuity and wonderful mental powers now thrown over the chasm.—The seeds of every thing we see now, were already living under the Divine Power. Thus the wildest stages of nature were leading to those of intellect and civilization. Are the contradictions

which we find in the moral world less likely to be removed? Will the two streams of good and evil meet, and disorder be removed—will not death be swallowed up in victory?—Yes. (*Inn at Bangor.*)

Tunbridge Wells, March 12th, 1833.

What is the Gospel—the *good tidings* of great joy to all people? Divest of theological language and scholastic notions the answer of all true Christians,—reduce it to *spiritual* practice, and you will be surprised at the sublime simplicity of the Christian Doctrine.

The answer is this—that men's sins are not to be pardoned on account of any religious expiations, or difficult and painful acts; but simply by God's mercy, as soon as the sinner is converted—i. e. repents what he has done, and is determined to follow Christ as his teacher, as his *moral* king, as his saviour from *moral* evils, or spiritual fears—resting his belief of all this, and his hopes for ever, on Christ himself—because from what he knows of him, the sinner is convinced Christ may be trusted; because he who died for mankind would not deceive us; because he that rose again by the special power of God, could not himself be deceived.—This is certainly a *Gospel*—"good tidings" to mankind.—But it is against the spirit of such a Gospel to demand from the followers of Christ a statement of the *causes* (the *rationale*) why the death of Christ saves those who repent their sins, and obey him. The scriptures do not explain this, nor could

human language convey such an information. The *physiology* of the invisible world should never be attempted by any Christian. It is that *physiological* system which, forced upon the Christian world by the false philosophy of Divines, discredits and ruins Christianity.

One of the passages announcing the *independence* of the true Christians *from a priesthood* is that quoted by Peter in 2nd Acts, and taken from Joel. It is extremely figurative. It nevertheless shows that *prophecy*, i. e. the exposition of religious points, was, under the Gospel, to belong to all who should have the spirit of Christ in them. The spirit of Christ is promised to all true Christians. "But ye (all Christians) have an unction (χρίσμα, consecration as priests) from the Holy One, and ye know all things," 1 John, ii. 20. You are your own priests and prophets, i. e. expounders.——"Stop,"—says the frightened Theologian—"are all Christians infallible?"—They are *infallible*, i. e. each Christian is a sure guide to himself—he cannot err in *regard to his own salvation*, when he follows the spirit of Christ. But "who is to ascertain that fact?"—God alone.

All externals—Honours, Ceremonies, &c.—all political and religious *Bodies*—are Figures, and Emblems, *Visible Forms*, which may have an indwelling, an animating spirit. That soul is *opinion*. When the opinion dies (which takes place very gradually, and

as imperceptibly as the hand of the clock moves) the *Forms* become incumbrances, the weight of which, society feels more and more grievously. They become the dead bodies bound to the living.

When any natural propensity is consecrated into a virtue, the greatest evils ensue. *Patriotism* is an instance of this. We are naturally led to give undue importance to ourselves—this, when the individual is clearly the object of his own feeling, is called *selfishness*. But when, under the name of patriotism, each individual indulges himself in vanity, in pride, in ambition, in cruelty—and yet does it as an *Englishman*, as a *Frenchman*, as a *Spaniard*—all these vices are reckoned virtues.

Tunbridge Wells, March 13, 1833.

One of the most beneficial consequences of knowing *God in Christ*, is the exclusion which that view gives to all metaphysical notions of the Deity. The metaphysical definitions of God are false, contradictory—they are the true source of Atheism. To say that God is All-powerful, All-merciful, All-good, and yet that he allows such a mass of misery as Divines make out, is revolting in the extreme. It is an insult to every thinking mind.—*Omnipotent!* What is the meaning of that word? If it is absolutely *unlimited* power, we are constantly contradicting it.—God, says the Divine, *cannot* forgive sin without atonement, &c. Oh! says our re-

verend philosopher, I mean that God's *nature* does not allow it.—Well, then, God's nature, like *my* nature, limits his power.—"But God's nature is not like *our* nature."—"Then neither you nor I know what we mean." Let Metaphysics alone. Study the *Manifestation* of God *to us* in Christ; the man who is one with God, *striving, struggling* against evil; the living image of God, for a time, seemingly overcome by evil—then rising triumphant—then disappearing from the scene of his struggle, and allowing his enemy to sow *tares*, &c., but not permitting him totally to regain the ground obtained by the Divine victory. No: the light of the Gospel may be obscured; not extinguished.—God manifest in the flesh will come again in glory—i. e. there will be a final triumph of good against evil in regard to the sons of men.—All this is intelligible—all this agrees with the appearances of nature. The Creator himself struggles; "My Father *worketh* hitherto." The Redeemer struggles; "and I work."—Do you mean, says the Divine, to limit the power of God?—I mean no such thing. I only follow his *revelations*—the natural and the supernatural—as far as they lead me—and then stop, without attempting to draw conclusions as to the nature of God.

My God—the God whom I know through Christ and *in* Christ, is a *struggling* God—a God who wisely, and powerfully, but not despotically, contends with Evil. And how I do delight in the feeling that I may be—nay, that I *am called to be* a Fellow-labourer with

God! Oh, that I may make this feeling the very soul of my existence! That I may rise every day to help my God, my Saviour, in the extension of good, of virtue, of happiness.. What an ennobling thought! How perfectly adapted to the feelings of love and sympathy—yes, that *sympathy* which he has given me. "This man blasphemeth—sympathy with God! how horrible!" Indeed! has he not called me fellow-worker! friend! son!

Letter from Lord Holland.

17th March, 1833.

Dear Blanco,

—— I think a sense of what is due to the public interests of Ireland would check a Government in forming any project that could retard or endanger the good which the Archbishop of Dublin is rapidly effecting in Ireland, and which no man but he can be expected to prosecute so successfully. I dare say there are many annoyances which beset him, in the prosecution of his great design of healing the inveterate religious animosities of that country, and I am well aware that the profits or worldly advantages of his See are very inadequate rewards for the trouble and anxiety such heavy responsibility and so arduous a task imposes on him; but

"tenuis non gloria—"

and I much mistake the character of your great and amiable friend, if a love of posthumous and *well-earned* fame, and, yet more, a consciousness of doing real good in his generation, are not greater incentives and consolations to his exertions, and in his difficulties, than either splendour or ease. I think you are alarmed more than is reasonable at the situation of Ireland. Time and the diffusion of knowledge are the true and specific cures, and it seems to me

that the protective law, combined with the existence of a Government fundamentally liberal and just, secure *time*, and the education under the auspices of the Archbishop and Board of Commissioners, promises a diffusion of knowledge. With these ingredients the medicine will be imperceptibly compounded, and the patient gradually purged, if not of all his peccant humours, at least of such as threaten dissolution or incapacity.

Yours,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

Letter to Lord Holland.

Tunbridge Wells, March 24, 1833.

My dear Lord Holland,

I cannot abstain from giving you my most sincere thanks for your letter on the success of my friend, the Archbishop of Dublin. I did not hesitate to show him your letter, for I knew he would be gratified. If all Churchmen were as attached to *Truth* as my excellent friend is, the Church would not be in *danger*; for that danger is the result of the encroaching and proud spirit with which Religion is frequently put forward for political purposes. The Archbishop knows too well what he has to expect from the falsely called *Religious* party. But from his first appearance in public life he deliberately devoted himself to the cause of Truth, and made up his mind to the consequences. He was courted, and he was attacked: but nothing could induce him to enlist under the colours of any party. Those who love reason and truth—the honest and upright of all denominations—may depend on his assistance, when needed, though secured by no previous engagement. I wish, with all my heart, he had a permanent seat in the House of Lords. He would keep many idle talkers in awe.

Believe me, dear Lord Holland,

Ever yours faithfully,

J. BLANCO WHITE.

Tunbridge Wells, April 9, 1833.

I feel happy in the conviction that every day my means of usefulness in this family seem to increase. * * * It is very desirable that *a stranger*, one not of the family, (for family becomes an extension of *self* in cases like the present,) should kindly yet firmly give a specimen, a corrected *foretaste* of the rights and power of *public* opinion—not the opinion of those whom the child identifies with himself.—My dear pupil—my boy—has been completely trained to this moral discipline. His moral and intellectual powers develop themselves beautifully, and he looks upon me as if I were a second father. The blessing of God be upon him, and upon his family! and may a similar blessing be upon *me*, that no selfish feeling of any kind may interfere with my work—or defeat my earnest desire of doing whatever good may be in my power, thus quietly and privately, during the few years of usefulness which may remain to me.*

Tunbridge Wells, April 13th, 1833.

D.D. The tendency of what you say about the Scriptures is to destroy Christianity. B. W.—Why?

* All my hopes have been disappointed—most lamentably disappointed. After two years' hard working with my little pupil, it was necessary to find another Tutor. He could not approach me for his lessons without the most painful nervousness. Yet he loved me, and I loved him. How much of this arose from some fault of mine, I know not. The impatience of an old, nervous invalid, is very ungovernable. Yet I tried to check it. But I am convinced (too late perhaps) that I am the last man to teach children. All my attempts that way have failed.—Liverpool, February 18th, 1835.

D.D.—Because a Christian must necessarily depend upon a revelation from God. B. W.—Very true. But there were many Christians before the existence of the New Testament—and among the Gentile converts few could read the Old. D.D.—That is the Papists' argument in favour of the authority of the Church. B. W.—The fact they allege is true; the inference is false. D.D.—What could Christianity be without the Scriptures? B. W.—Christians would be deprived of a very great advantage if they had not the Scriptures. Yet Christianity does not entirely *depend* on the Scriptures. Men might be convinced that Christ is the Messiah, *our Moral King*; they might learn his precepts and obey them —and all this might be obtained by oral instruction. D.D.—What! Traditions! B. W.—Yes, but traditions, which would not make a Pope, for they are *not infallible,* since they are handed down by *Men.*

Tunbridge Wells, April 18, 1833.

I have been reading in the *Memorabilia,* the only classical book I have brought with me.

The narrow-mindedness which the Theological theories have produced is astonishing.—As if Christianity were not safe but by the complete denial of virtue, except when the Gospel fosters it, mankind have been studiously painted as consisting of Monsters. The Christianity of *Original Sin*—the Christianity which stands exclusively on the utter corruption of

man—will not see virtue any where—and will positively libel human nature and its Author. The author however of the existing human nature—that is, the human nature which was poisoned by the forbidden fruit—is (to these good people) the Devil. I see it however in a very different light. Read the description of the good and virtuous of the times of Xenophon, *Mem.*, lib. ii. c. vi. It is refreshing to find that such men as are there painted in the words of Socrates, existed under the moral disadvantages of the world before Christ. But virtue has always existed in the creation of God. That virtue, however, has been exalted and ennobled,—it has also been wonderfully extended by adapting it to the poor and humble. "To the poor the Gospel is preached."

Tunbridge Wells, April 22, 1833.

The whole of yesterday I passed in bed, trying to stop a cold. I read the whole of Whewell's work, The Bridgewater Treatise, without leaving the book out of my hand except for half a hour. It is a most admirable book.

It has occurred to me this morning that the δεισιδαιμονια of the ancients related to action; ours to opinion. The one was physical; the other metaphysical. The timid among the ancients were afraid lest they had done or omitted something which might endanger them with the invisible powers. Our good people are afraid of holding or neglecting some abstract tenet, which may endanger their

salvation. Our δεισιδαιμονια belongs to a more refined age.

April 25th, 1833.

I have not been able to leave my room since Monday evening.———Nevertheless I thank God that I suffer without despondency. I have been this moment thinking of my dissolution. My feelings are free from fear on that score, and I trust they will be so when the last hour comes. I have not a shadow of doubt that if I am to be preserved to eternal life in Christ's keeping, it will be through pure benevolence and mercy.—Away with School Theology. I love the hand that brought me into existence. I love it in spite of suffering. I love him who having taught me and mankind how to love, to obey, and to trust in "*his God and* my God," gave himself up to death on the Cross, confident that God "would not leave his soul in Hades, nor allow his holy one to see corruption." I do not know—I do not ask "how can these things be;" but I trust that they *are indeed*, that they *exist*, in some sense or other, for my *benefit* and salvation.

Tunbridge Wells, Saturday,
April 27th, 1833.

The Influenza cold which attacked me last Sunday has yielded under the skilful management of Dr. Mayo. I have dressed this morning, intending to go down to dinner in the afternoon. But I am very

weak. On Thursday I was so ill that I could not employ my thoughts in the usual way. Yesterday I began to find them ready to run in the accustomed channels. I was reading the Epistle to the Romans, in order to collect Paul's views on Conscience. When tired, I varied my occupation by reading the first chapter of that epistle in Luther's translation. I was surprised at the freedom of the version. In two or three places it is rather a paraphrase than a translation. One of Luther's renderings has set me thinking in a direction which neither the reading of the English translation, nor that of the original, ever pointed out to me. Though my knowledge of German is still very imperfect, I shall venture to render Luther's translation of the 4th verse, 1st chapter, literally.

"And (was) powerfully (ἐν δυνάμει) shown as the son of God after (or according to, *secundum*) the Spirit which sanctifies, since the time that he rose from the dead; namely, Jesus Christ our Lord."

When I compare this translation with the Greek, I do not feel convinced that it conveys the same meaning. The English is certainly more literal, though less intelligible. The meaning of ἐν δυνάμει is very vague. But let us consider the relation in which δύναμις stands with πνεῦμα in the passage. The *Man* Christ was the son of God through or by means of the *Spirit* (Power) of God which was given to him "not by measure." The clearest proof of this gift was his resurrection, effected by the Spirit (Power) of God; and Christ was thus declared (de-

fined) the Son of God ἐν δυνάμει. "Stop! stop!" says D.D., "πνεῦμα is the Personal Spirit of God." —B. W. Do you forget that Spirit means NINETEEN different things? Why should I be denied the right of choosing *one* of them for this passage? You, D.D., may choose another, if you please; but do not say that *my sense* is against Scripture. It is against your *sense* of Scripture.

I believe I understood the force of another word in the 15th verse of the 2nd chapter. But this meaning occurred to me independently of any translation.

Οἵτινες ἐνδείκνυνται τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου γραπτὸν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν. The ἔργον, i.e. the *result* of the contrivance; as the ἔργον of an art.

Tunbridge Wells, April 30th, 1833.

Q. What is an established Church?—*A.* A set of religious teachers, who, *by law*, possess a certain portion of national wealth set apart for them exclusively, for no other reason but that they bind themselves to teach and profess certain doctrines. *Q.* Is that a good reason?—*A.* It is a good one if the doctrines are true. *Q.* Does not the law declare that?—*A.* It certainly implies it; but what does the law know about the truth of theological doctrines? *Q.* If the ground on which an established church stands (in Protestant countries) is so unsound, will the church continue long to exist?—*A.* I cannot give a definite

answer to that question. A number of old establishments continue long in existence. The numerous interests concerned in the preservation of the Church are likely to support it nearly as it is, till there is a strong political change in this country: that there will be a very strong one at no very distant period, I have no doubt. *Q.* What do you think is the present state of public opinion on the subject of the Church-establishment?—*A.* In a country where dissent is allowed by Law, public opinion must always be against it. *Q.* Do you think that in intolerant countries public opinion is not against the Church-establishment?—*A.* Where dissent is not permitted, there are numbers who are strongly attached to the Church from superstition; and, questions upon these subjects being forbidden, the old feelings and habits remain generally undisturbed. The small number of thinking men who disapprove of, and, perhaps, hate the Roman Catholic establishment in those countries, are frequently reconciled to its existence, as a necessary contrivance to keep the mass of the people quiet. As to the truth of the doctrines, there is no question in those countries. The establishment, to some, is of divine origin; to others, it is an imposture—but a necessary one. The former approve it without hesitation; the latter have no preference for any other. Not so in Protestant countries. The great mass of the people (if dissenters) disapprove the establishment as religiously wrong; and each man knows what he should substitute for it, if it were left to him. Every

'dissenter disapproves of the establishment *on principle.* For the sake of that principle, if he is a minister, he submits to the daily mortification of seeing others take precedence of him; and is left to poverty and obscurity, *because they are wrong,* (for so he believes,) and for that very reason obtain all the advantages from which he is precluded. This will not be tolerated much longer. It would be safer for any established Church, if Parliament were to say,—'Here is property for teachers of religion—we are no judges of which of the Christian sects is, theologically speaking, the best,—but this, or that, seems to us the one best fitted to assist the business of Government, whether true or false. We appropriate, therefore, this property to those who hold such and such doctrines.' This would raise less opposition than the claim of precedence on the plea of *Truth,* which implies an insult.

Tunbridge Wells, 1st May, 1833.

How could Christianity have been received among thousands of thousands so quickly, unless their minds had been disposed as by a common impulse? We know such impulses for good and for evil. The writings of the New Testament call it the *Spirit,* the Spirit of God, the *Spirit* of Christ. From Paul's indirect account of the Corinthians, it appears that enthusiasm broke out in many. This is natural. If by the immediate operation of God, certain men received a clear and simultaneous view of Christianity,

accompanied with courage, zeal, and some supernatural gifts suited to the work of laying the foundations of Christianity, it is almost an inevitable consequence that the nervous and hysterical persons who observed this should become morbidly affected by it.—As to what in the New Testament is called the Spirit of God—those holy desires, those high moral views, which the most philosophical persons must acknowledge (if they have experienced them) to come from out of the mind itself—nothing is more reasonable than that on such an occasion as that of the publication of Christianity, they should have been abundantly given to the human agents of that great work.—I cannot suppose my mind to be insulated away from the infinite mind, from which I acknowledge it to proceed. I feel it my duty—indeed, my *want*—to approach the Father of my spirit; and, when I approach him, I doubt not he gives me more and more of his Spirit.

The same day.

As the secret hand of Providence was, about the end of the 15th century, preparing the open resistance to the pretended *living* oracle of the Church, which successfully established the Reformation, so, I humbly believe, it is, at this time, preparing the means of removing the evils which oppress Christianity from the notion of a *dead* or *verbal* oracle.—Nothing can be more anomalous than the state of the Protestant Churches in regard to the Bible. Here

we have a book, a translated book, which is identified with God, with Christ, and with the very means which are intended to save men. Is it the material book—the figure of the letters—the sound of the words, which are to perform this beneficial office for man? People are shocked at the supposition. Then it must be the *sense*, i.e. one sense out of a multitude which the words of the book may bear. Which? Here we split. Numerous answers are heard, all in angry and uncharitable accents. Some one of these interpretations may be true. It might happen, indeed, that all missed the true meaning. But what has become of the ORACLE, on the certainty of which the salvation of men is believed to depend? I know that this will be met with the invidious observation—"so there is no revelation from God?" I answer, It is a *fact* that there is no revelation of *the kind which you represent*. When the Papists urge that the Scripture is useless without an infallible interpreter, do Protestants submit to the charge? Why should a *similar* inference be valid when I say that the *letter* of the Scripture is not, and cannot be, an *infallible* interpreter of the *Spirit* of Revelation? What I deny is, that Revelation was granted with an intention of making saving faith depend on the sense of *figurative* and *notional* words. In that case no one can be saved but those who, in the Lottery of theological opinions, draw the right ticket. But what a strange Revelation this is! What a strange Gospel, i.e. GOOD TIDINGS!

What then is the Scripture? A written collection of *Traditions* and *Speeches* concerning Revelation, collected and preserved under that Providence of God which established, propagated, and preserves Christianity?—We have no higher source of information upon religious points. But is it not *inspired*?—I will not give an answer to this question till I am told what the interrogator means by the *inspiration of a book*.—I acknowledge that some of the authors of the books of Scripture possessed *supernatural gifts* for certain purposes. But that they were not totally exempted from error as writers, I know as A FACT from their writings. That the writings themselves have not been preserved from interpolation, I know as A FACT. An error of the slightest description, an interpolation of the most indifferent kind (that of the three witnesses is not trifling),—if any such thing is *actually* found in the Bible, the theory of plenary inspiration is at an end.—"But how can it be supposed that God would allow error in essentials?" I answer, "How can it be supposed that he would allow three or four, perhaps twenty, meanings in the words which were to convey those essentials?" These unquestionable facts, therefore, convince me that those points cannot be *essentials*. "But (it is said) even the Divinity of Christ is denied by Unitarians, as not contained in the Scriptures according to their true sense." Very true: and for that reason I conceive that the acknowledgment of the Divinity of Christ cannot be one of the essentials of Christianity.—

"Horrible!" It may be so; but I see no alternative between charging God with setting a trap for men, and my conclusion that he does not demand from them such an explicit acknowledgment.

But is there anything in the Scriptures upon which Christians are agreed?—A great deal, and of the utmost importance.—All good men who acknowledge Christ as their Divine Master, agree *in the Spirit* of his doctrine. They all know what temper of mind, what course of action, what views and hopes the Spirit of Christ implies and teaches. This therefore, and nothing else, can be *essential.* The Gospel contains no logical, no verbal questions. The Spirit of God strengthened the apostles to preach the *Spirit* of the Gospel, and thereupon the revelation is perfect.—The true Christians whom their preaching formed were (as such Christians will always be) the true record of the *essentials* of the Gospel. (2 Cor. iii.) Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men . . . manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone (why should parchment be more fit) but in fleshly tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward . . . who also hath made us able ministers of the *New Testament; not of the letter;* but of *the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.*

But what shall we say of the Old Testament?—

The Old Testament is a collection of venerable records of the peculiar government of God, in relation to that people from which Christ was to come. It contains the system of moral discipline under which the hopes of the Messiah, and the worship of the one true God, were preserved. It contains prophecies concerning the Messiah which are very striking, and which were much more so to the Jews, many of whom accepted the Gospel on that ground. But why should an alternative be made, either to believe that the writers of those books *never* added the account of a miracle, as an *ornament*,—or to reject Christ and his Gospel? —This is an outrageous spirit of theory!

Tunbridge Wells, May 17th, 1833.

My illness has greatly increased for the last five or six days. I feel better to-day, but very weak. I have scarcely been able to look into a book, much less to write.

I have been considering how little Theological doctrine most of Paul's epistles contain.—I am more and more convinced that the teaching of the apostles (especially Paul's) consisted more in negative than in positive doctrines—more in declaring what is not, than what *is* true religion. What true religion is they announced in very few words.—They taught men that the spiritual safety (salvation) of men depends on the practice of virtue, as explained by Christ, supported by trust in God's mercy, through

Christ.—But Paul's chief employment consisted in dissuading men from the practice of other means of sanctification.

I have been considering the general character of Paul's 1st Ep. to Timothy, thinking, while I read it, what a modern archbishop (say of Canterbury) would write in similar circumstances to a young pupil who had been appointed to a See in Ireland. What a cloud of metaphysics would His Grace raise about Unitarianism, Popery, Arianism, &c. St. Paul does no such thing. He gives a good deal of advice in regard to conduct: and when he comes to the point of *persons who depart from the Faith,* he does not mention a single point of abstract doctrine. Falling from the Faith is, in Paul's language, to fall from the assurance of the truth, that, in religion, nothing is necessary but the practice of virtue, and trust in Christ for pardon and salvation. How are those *heretics*—those men expressly *foretold* by the spirit, characterised?—Are they described as teaching the Ὁμοιουσια, instead of the Ὁμοουσια—&c., &c.? No. Their fatal errors consist in teaching *ascetism,* or religious *gymnastics*: forbidding to marry, commanding to abstain from meats, &c. What does Paul desire Timothy to do? "Refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself (RATHER is improperly added in the English translation) unto godliness; for bodily exercise," σωματικὴ γυμνασία, (i. e. ascetic practices in regard to the body,) "profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things."

Tunbridge Wells, Sunday,
May 26th, 1833.

At Mr. Pope's—during the short visit of the Archbishop and his family to St. Leonard's.

Having finished a Sermon, which if my friend —— should like, he will preach at his chapel, I have collected my mind in prayer.

I am struck with the idea of the many thousands, or rather millions, who, on this day, meet for Christian worship. It is true that superstition mixes with the devotion of most of these persons—that many join the Christian congregations from worldly motives. Yet, what an acknowledgment this is of the supremacy of virtue! Whoever kneels before God, in the name of Christ, attests, more or less, that man has within him a witness to the existence of something beyond, and above, every object that affects the senses. Whoever acknowledges that the Son of God submitted to death on the Cross, in order to produce this moral state (and its future consequences) among mankind, will either perceive, or be ready to acknowledge, that no great blessing—no important good—can be obtained without a sacrifice. Why this should be, we do not know. But this wonderful and successful instance of self-devotion is the noblest lesson which has been presented to the mind of man. "He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me," Matt. x. 38. A declaration, as true as it is beautiful—morally beautiful!

May I be worthy of being found in the train of Christ, bearing my cross, bearing my share in suffering, for the sake of promoting the cause for which Christ died!

Tunbridge Wells, June 8th, 1833.

The attempt to write a continuation of Doblado's Letters, which I put into practice for a few days at the other end of this Book, has interrupted the growing habit of writing some of my thoughts here. I much doubt that I shall have either time or spirit for that kind of composition. If I were to make an effort, it would now be for another purpose. I have read "The Travels of an Irish Gentleman in search of a Religion"—a work lately published, from the pen of the poet Moore. It is a book of very mischievous tendency. Its object is to increase the hatred of the Irish Catholics against the Protestants. Strange to say, the professed partisan of Liberty has been employing his powerful talents in the service of the Irish Priests. Not satisfied with the power which they have over the Catholic population of Ireland, Mr. Moore is contributing with all his might to the more perfect subjection of the Irish to the interpreters of the *only safe* rule of Faith—Romish Tradition. He displays a great deal of reading in Ecclesiastical and controversial Writers. But using with great art the most popular weapons, he takes for granted that if the principal tenets of Popery are found in the Fathers of the first four centuries,

Popery and Christianity must be identical. The first volume contains the passages so often repeated by the Papists; without a particle of criticism, though the writer is too well read not to know the doubts which hang over the *Patres Apostolici*. He himself, in the character of a German Professor, asserts in the second volume the frequency of forgery and interpolation which prevailed in the second century. But authorities are all he cares for. He knows that, in regard to a numerous class of people, the fact that St. Augustine and St. Ambrose worshipped reliques is enough to make such worship a part of the Gospel. These people will certainly not go to the originals, and much less examine what sort of men those two bishops were.

The second volume is written with great ability. Such, however, is Mr. Moore's confidence in the passions and party spirit which he wishes to strengthen, that he takes very great liberties with the Fathers themselves, and goes so far as to prove that some of those pillars of the Church had a very knowing eye in regard to female beauty. His German Professor speaks *con amore* on the subject of Rationalism. It is impossible for the author to disguise how fully he feels the weight of what his imaginary German says. His pictures of the Reformers are drawn with all the malignity of deep-seated hatred. The living and the dead are treated with the utmost unfairness and petulance. But after all, what is the *argument*? It is this, and no other.

Popery is very ancient. Those who attack Popery do not agree among themselves. The Scriptures cannot make them agree. Many have become Unitarians, infidels, &c. &c.—*Ergo*, let us renounce reason, and put ourselves under the guidance of Rome.—But is Rome a good guide?—Of course. Can Rome keep people in unity of sentiment?—She certainly knows how to keep them silent.—Is there no tendency in Popery to produce infidelity?—At all events, it will not make a noise.—The tone of hypocritical devotion with which the author renounces Reason and embraces Faith, is disgusting. But when he asserts, with the Divines of his party, that there is no alternative between Popery and Infidelity, is he not aware that he proves the direct tendency of that system to produce complete unbelief? Suppose the alleged tendency of the Protestant principle of private judgment to create unbelief, does not the author know, that while the Protestant who doubts has a very great number of stages at which to stop, between the Athanasian Creed and the rejection of Christ, the Roman Catholic is directly and irresistibly carried to that point, the moment he convinces himself that his Church has erred in any one doctrine?—If he does not jump into that conclusion, he becomes a Protestant, *in fact*, whatever he may continue to be *in name*. Mr. Moore cannot be so blind as not to perceive that the want of positive agreement among Protestants does not prove the supernatural claims of the Church of Rome. The name Protes-

tant does not imply agreement in doctrine—it only expresses the rejection of a pretended authority;—in this all Protestants are agreed. The fair and well-meaning disputant should endeavour to show that they are wrong *on that point.* I wish I could write an Answer to the work in question.

Redesdale, Stillorgan, Sept. 26th, 1833.

The work mentioned in the preceding note was finished in Dublin on the 29th of August, i. e. in about eighty-one days, or less than twelve weeks. I am now seeing it through the press, and have already prepared a good quantity of additional matter as illustrations. The four weeks which I spent at the Palace in Dublin by myself, were very favourable to the completion of the work. During that time I wrote two-thirds of it.* I have shown several portions of my manuscript to the Rev. C. Dickinson,† whose judgment I value highly. The Archbishop has read it all. Both speak very encouragingly of it. But as I go on correcting the press, I grow more and more dissatisfied with my performance—and wish I had been able to bring the whole into better keeping. It certainly wants *finishing.* But I can neither delay the publication, nor bestow much more time upon it. I commit it to Providence, without

* The eight preceding weeks were to me full of trouble and suffering, especially in the house at St. Mary Abbot's, Kensington. I could scarcely get a night's rest. Parts of the work were written at two o'clock in the morning.

† The late Bishop of Meath.

desiring to obtain any gratification by it.—Though I should rejoice to see it succeed, yet I look upon it as a service which I was called upon to render to *Religion.* "I have done what I could." The result is not within my power.

Redesdale, Nov. 6, 1833.

We are Englishmen, and they are Frenchmen—a set of rascally beggars.

We are Frenchmen and they are Englishmen—*Sacre!*

We are Spaniards and they are Americans.

We are Mexicans and they are Spaniards.

We are Russians and they are Poles.

We are Poles and they are Muscovites.

"Is it not curious that words so very different in meaning as Englishman, Frenchman, Spaniard, Pole, &c. have the same effect on the passions and feelings of mankind?"

"You are mistaken.—You attribute the effects in question to the wrong word. It is the word WE that produces them."

CHAPTER IV.

EXTRACTS FROM JOURNALS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

1834.—Ætat. 59.

Dublin, Jan. 5, 1834.

My answer to Moore has been before the public long enough to show in what manner it has been received by some parties. The Dublin *Pietists*, represented, it seems, by the Christian Observer, declare themselves against it: yet they grant some merit to the work. Not so the Protestant party lately formed in Oxford, who, by means of the British Magazine, (a satellite of the British Critic,) are endeavouring to make the Church of England as like as possible to that of Rome—except in having a Pope. In that Periodical my work is treated with the utmost scorn;—the author of it is declared to be one of those who are convinced of the truth of Christianity against their will, and by the *overpowering* character of the evidences—meaning, of course, the *argumentative* evidences; he is called *unlearned* and *arrogant*, &c. &c. On the two latter epithets I have nothing to say. I have not been, indeed, indolent in regard to learning; nor am I conscious of that proud confidence in myself which might make me

arrogant. Perhaps the Reviewer considers every dissent from himself and his party as a piece of arrogance, and every view of criticism, history, &c. with which he is not familiar, as betraying the want of a regular literary education. But I will not quarrel with him on that account. It is, however, of some importance to the cause of Christianity, that a positive denial of what he asserts in regard to my religious conviction be prepared by me, to be published after my death, perhaps, with some portions of this Book. I am (thanks be to God!) a sincere believer in Christ, and am satisfied that my belief is founded on *rational* grounds. But it is not true that the *argumentative* evidence has forced me to believe. Were it not for the *internal* evidence addressed to my heart, were it not for the *moral* attraction of the Gospel, (acting, of course, in *conjunction with* the historical evidence,) I should not have returned to Christianity. My *practical* belief has always been, and continues at this moment, disproportionate to my *logical* conviction; and, from the nature of the subject, I conceive it ought to be so. As far as I can judge, I am safer in this state than in that of those who trust so much in argument. I repeat, that my conviction is *rational*; but in estimating the *reasons* which make me a Christian, I find that the most powerful and effective is the *love* which Christ has obtained in my heart, and which I trust his Divine spirit will nourish and increase to the last moment of my life.

Palace, Dublin, Jan. 28th, 1834.

My dear J——,

I need not give you an account of myself. I am just what I have been for many years—a helpless invalid, to whom the approach of threescore years does not open a very encouraging prospect. But old age does me good. I am happier than at any previous period of my life, because I am more tranquil under the influence of religious hope. Controversial points have ceased to harrass my mind, and I see my end approaching under a calm conviction that death will be a transition to a higher and infinitely more happy condition, than the best which is allotted to man in this life. When I look back to the agitated, dangerous, and uncertain course which I have been carried through, the protection which I have experienced at the hands of Providence is to me a most certain pledge of final success. I trust I shall die happy.—But I do not mean to write a sermon;—this was only by the way, and unintended. ——

Dublin, Jan. 31, 1834.

Religion, under the Christian system, is neither an *occupation,* nor a *science.* All errors among Christians, as Christians, (both theoretical and practical errors,) have arisen from misconceptions on this point. First, in regard to the fact that religion, under the Christian dispensation, is not an *occupation* or employment, such as the Jewish and Pagan θρησκεια or devotion was. Had Christ intended that the spiritual progress of his disciples should be in proportion to the number and length of their religious exercises, either he or his apostles would have given some instructions concerning the character of these

devout practices. But we find nothing of this kind. On the contrary, when James gives a description of the Christian substitute for θρησκεια, he reduces the whole to works of benevolence. And let it be observed that this comes from that apostle who (as we may find by a comparison of all we know of him from the Acts and his own Epistle, with what we know of Peter and Paul,) had preserved as much of the spirit of Judaism, as was not actually destructive of the Gospel. There is nothing in the New Testament, regarding Christians, which can make us suppose that piety consists in any thing like the piety of those who, under the former dispensation, departed not from the Temple, fasting and praying. It is curious (and to me an additional proof of what I am stating) that if we admit the principle that Christian piety consists in devotional *practices*, there is no sound reason to object to Monachism. This is to me a most powerful *argumentum ad absurdum*. And there is no possibility of avoiding it. Allow the piety which Keble and Newman wish to introduce;—lay it down that having service at church three times a-week is desirable for the promotion of Christian piety, and then exert your ingenuity to discover why we should wish for so much and no more. Of course, cathedral service every day must be still more desirable. Still more desirable would it be to have Monasteries, where Christians should pass their lives in singing psalms, in meditation, in pious reading—to which if they added preaching, and visiting the

poor and sick, and fasting, and some other means which their desire of keeping the body under would easily suggest—we should have Monasteries among Protestants, exactly upon the plan of the Popish Orders.—I conceive, however, that this prospect would not deter my friends. Nor do I indeed mean that there is any thing positively wrong in all this. My objection arises from the circumstance that it is *not Christianity*.

But it will be said, *are not such things means of grace*?—'Means of grace' is a favourite expression with *Protestant Pietists*. But where are any means of GRACE recommended in the New Testament? *Prayer and the Lord's Supper* are certainly recommended to the Christian, and both are of the greatest consequence in supporting and increasing the spirit of Christ in us. But neither Prayer nor the Lord's Supper can be supposed to act by a kind of *Rule of Three*. Now this is the kind of *ratio* between the length of Prayer (which by the by is disapproved by our Saviour) which the Oxford High Church Pietists and many others seem to suppose. But if Prayer must be incessant, (as St. Paul recommends,) it cannot be *formal*—it cannot be *external*. It must consist chiefly in the *desire* of the heart; it must be a habitual longing to live *unto Christ*, to do every thing for his sake. *Living by Faith* is not an occupation. The beauty of this principle consists in converting the *commonest occupations* of life into prayer and adoration. The life of the most industrious man, if

he is a true Christian, becomes an uninterrupted exercise of piety. ——

Letter to Lord Holland.

Palace, Dublin, Feb. 20th, 1834.

My dear Lord Holland,

The Archbishop has given me the agreeable commission of writing to you in his name, to thank you for your letter concerning his second Letter to Lord Grey. ——

I need not say much about myself, for invalids at my time of life do not commonly mend. I seldom venture out, but as I can employ myself without much fatigue at home, I do not regret the want of bodily strength to move about. I have lately taken a fancy to German, and have succeeded in *reading* it with tolerable ease. It is to me the most interesting of living languages. Its copiousness makes it very difficult. I admire the learning, as well as the moderation, of some of their Divines. There is one *Neander*, Professor of Divinity at Berlin, whose Ecclesiastical History I have lately read with very great interest. My admiration of the writer induced me to write to him a long Latin letter, to which I yesterday received a very kind answer in the same language. This is something like the literary correspondence of former times.

My best regards to Lady Holland and Mr. Allen.

Yours ever sincerely,

J. Blanco White.

Letter from Lord Holland.

6th March, 1834.

Dear Blanco,

I believe you to be the author and editor of the Second Travels of an Irishman in search of a Religion; if you are, accept my best and warmest thanks for the delight and in-

struction I have derived from the perusal of that lively, acute, and in many particulars, original work. The banter is good, and the argument most powerful.

Yours ever,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

When you write, tell me of the health and well-being and doing of your Archbishop. I wish to God we had him permanently in the House of Lords. Well could we spare for him enow of such as, for their bellies' sake, creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold.

Palace, Dublin, March 8th, 1834.

My dear Lord Holland,

I write in bed, where I have been these last three days with a severe bilious fever. I hope I am now recovering.

Many thanks for your kind expressions in regard to the *Second Travels*. The work is mine, and I have no particular desire to preserve the *incog*. I published it anonymously because I was answering an anonymous work, and because the tone and character I wished to give it was totally removed from theological and controversial gravity. It certainly gives me the highest satisfaction to have your approbation of it.

My Archbishop is tolerably well; but his incessant activity is I fear too much even for his constitutional strength, which is certainly considerable. I am sure that if you had him in the House of Lords he would keep many of the Members in better order than they are at present. The manner in which he is attacked by the Standard shows how much they are afraid of him. He is certainly afraid of no man. He is a *sensible and refined John Knox*.

My best regards to Lady Holland and Allen. I feel fatigued, and must finish this scrawl.

Yours ever faithfully,

J. BLANCO WHITE.

Redesdale, April 1st, 1834.

I have been lately reading part of a German pamphlet by Nitssch, Professor of Theology at Bonn, entitled, Über den Religionsbegriff der Alten—i. e. On the Notion which the Ancients expressed by the word *Religion*. The German treatise is very learned and instructive. The philological disquisition by which the author wishes to prove that Cicero's derivation *a relegendo* is better than that of Lactantius' *a religando*, is beautiful.—But I do not mean to settle that question. To me, this point has appeared in connection with a more important one—Is Christianity properly called the Christian RELIGION?—Is the Gospel a RELIGION?—We do not find any word equivalent to *Religion* applied to the Gospel in the New Testament. Appellations of that kind originated with the Christian writers, as soon as the true character of Christianity began to be obscured in the minds of those who professed it. Ευσεβεια, θρησκεια, would be ill adapted to a revelation the very object of which is, to remove all notions of means by which men may *worship well and properly*, or become θρησκαι, according to a regular method. The Christian θρησκεια is benevolence and purity according to the apostle James; and true worshippers, according to Christ, are those who worship *in spirit*, i. e. mentally, not according to *worldly* or fleshly elements, (directions, instructions,) and in *truth*, i. e. without symbols and emblems.—In my opinion, Christ came to

liberate mankind from *all religion,* that great source of the worst human evils;

"Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum!"

All men devoted to *a religion* are slaves, servants, θρησκαι.—Christ came to make us *free.* "Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed in him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye will know the truth, (the Truth into which those who continued his disciples were led by the Holy Spirit, i. e. the saving truth of the Gospel,) and the *truth will make you free.*" John viii. 31, 32.

There are two kinds of slavery in this matter. One is slavery to sin—to which Christ alludes in verse 34; the other is slavery to superstition—θρησκεια. Christ did not allude to this last, because not even his apostles were able to understand the true spiritual freedom which the Gospel was to give those who should believe in him. Freedom from sin is the natural consequence of that Spirit of God which makes us free from *all Law,* and consequently from all Religion.—The evils which oppress Christianity will disappear, in proportion as Christians can read this statement without being shocked. Yet St. Paul teaches nothing so repeatedly, so clearly as this.

Redesdale, April 14th, 1834.

Religion—i. e. the method of pleasing the Deity—may be, 1st. external, ceremonial, addressed to the

senses, and using the body as an instrument of devotion.—Hence Paul calls it *carnal*, i. e. confined chiefly to the *flesh*, the body, the animal part of man—and to the ψυχη, the seat of *sentiment or feeling*.—(It is a pity that English should be so poor in philosophical terms. *Sensual* has been irrecoverably degraded to express gross pleasure. *Sensuous*, which has been proposed, is disagreeable, and has some secret association in the mind with something like sensual. I wish it were possible to introduce *sensive* or *sentitive*.—The termination *ive* forms a very numerous family of what might be called *active adjectives*. *Sensive* or *sentitive* would express, by analogy, that which makes us feel. But the thing is hopeless. Words must be adopted by the multitude, and where the multitude feel no want of a word, they will not put themselves to the trouble of understanding it; they will set their faces against it in the most resolute manner.)

2nd. Religion may be verbal, i. e. consisting in the belief that the sense of certain words or combination of words is rightly expressed by *certain other words or combinations of words*, and not by any other. —Christianity has been reduced to this state by *Churches and Divines*.

3rd. Religion may be *spiritual*, i. e. consisting in a certain state of the *spirit* or *mind of man*, for the government of the whole man. Such is genuine Christianity.—That state of mind is called *Faith*.

It is not to be supposed that, in reality, any one of these *species* can exist purely by themselves, and

without running more or less into each other. Even the grossest idolatry is intended to produce a certain state of mind, for the moral government of man.—The *verbal religion* of the Christian churches, i. e. of the different bodies of clergy, (for soon after the death of the apostles, *Church* began to confine its signification more and more to that sense,) allows more or less *true faith* to exist in individuals.—Finally, the *spiritual religion* does not necessarily exclude *externals*: it only demands that the *externals* shall be considered as mere *expressions* of the state of the *mind which has true faith*. *Spiritual* religion rejects everything external which is proposed as a *means* of salvation, that is, a *method* to obtain the favour of the Deity.

To the Rev. George Armstrong, Kilsharvan, Drogheda.

Palace, Dublin, May 1st, 1834.

Dear Sir,

The letters which you had the goodness to address me, while I was residing at Oxford, the ability and love of truth which the pamphlets accompanying them display, and the goodnatured alacrity with which you appeared in my defence, when I was grossly abused and calumniated in the Irish papers, do not allow me to forget you, though I have not the pleasure of knowing you personally. Ever since, two years ago, I came to reside in this country, invited by my kind friend the Archbishop of Dublin, (not to hold preferment, for that would be against a most solemn determination taken by me long since; but to live under his roof as a favoured friend,) I began to make inquiries as to your

residence, that I might have the pleasure of expressing to you the sentiments which I have stated already. Many (unfortunately enough!) would interpret this feeling by supposing a tendency on my mind towards the theological principles which you have publicly embraced. But they would be very much mistaken. I am very far from approving the *definite* denials of the Trinitarian doctrines, and the definite *assertions* which some Unitarians substitute for those doctrines; though I regret the existence of too much *definiteness* of metaphysical language, on the side to which I belong. The two little works which I take the liberty to send for your acceptance (especially that which is published without my name) will show you in what spirit I would (if I had power) endeavour to conciliate Christians (who are worthy of that name) on points where human language cannot convey any definite notion, and is constantly exposed to *contradict* itself. The day, I trust, will come, though, especially in this country, it will not dawn till some generations have passed away, when, whatever may be the difference of what may be called the *technical* language of theology, all who believe in God, the Father of Christ, all who love God in Christ, all who trust, for life and eternity, in God through Christ, will recognize each other as heirs of salvation. Would that Christians had never attempted to explain what no created mind can grasp—and that such *analyses* (as they may well be called,) of the Divine nature, which are the chief cause of the prevalent Unbelief in Europe, had never been attempted, in the rash spirit of controversial zeal. As long as I considered such theories as essential points, my Christianity was in danger. I thank God that since I learnt to give them their proper value, not only my trust in Christ, *in his unity with God*, has become a part I may say of my moral being, but my love of Him, and my wish to obey Him, have increased. I do not attempt to understand the *physiology* of that union; neither is it necessary to my Faith.

With earnest prayer for your spiritual welfare, and such temporal blessings as may contribute to it, I am,

Dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
J. Blanco White.

P.S. I could not procure your address till two days ago. —I am in the country at a short distance from Dublin, but letters directed to the Palace will reach me.

May 1st, 1834.

Never establish the Existence of a Miracle, on the ground that it is *wanted.*

According to the established notions about faith, no miracle could be conceived more absolutely wanted than that which would afford an *infallible expounder* of the Scriptures.—But we are no judges of what is a real *want* in the eyes of God. We certainly *want* many things which he has not given us.

May 5th, 1834.

If ever I find myself ready to write on that most important point—the authority of the Bible, in contradistinction of what is called the inspiration of the Bible—I wish to introduce an illustration by means of a German tale, which I have in *Bernay's* Anthology. It is the tale of the Family ring, which was to be possessed by the representative of the family, so that every one should transmit it to him who was to

succeed him in that representation. One of the possessors of the ring had three sons, whom he loved equally. To each of them he secretly promised the ring. He had two other rings made, which could not be distinguished from the old one, and gave one to each of his sons. When the man died, each contended that he was Lord of the others by virtue of the *true* ring. The Judge declared that it was evidently the intention of their father to make them all equal; and that since the peculiar property of the ring had always been believed to be, the power of making the possessor particularly amiable, each should strive to prove himself the possessor of the *true* ring, by showing his superiority in that quality.

Redesdale, May 20th, 1834.

As the light of this world is addressed to the eye, so every information, instruction, revelation, is addressed to the Understanding. As closing, injuring or destroying our own eyes would be a strange mark of respect to the material Sun—the source of material light—so it must be most outrageous to paralyse our Understanding in honour of the Sun of Righteousness, the source of Christian revelation or spiritual light.

Redesdale, May 25th, 1834.

A note which I have just received is very valuable to me. The instance which my dear friend William

Pope mentions in it, of a London physician, dangerously ill, who has strengthened his wavering Christian faith by means of my "Second Travels," is extremely satisfactory. My chief aim in that work was to assist persons in that situation; and I thank God that I have not entirely missed that aim. The freedom with which, for several years, I have followed the "light that is in me" in the study of Christianity, has at times raised an apprehension that I might be a dangerous writer, and a dangerous speaker or *converser* on those subjects. Yet I have followed "my light," I believe, humbly and conscientiously. I have kept back every view which I could not myself discover *clearly*. But I could never compromise TRUTH, i. e. my *conviction*, the only truth to which I owe my moral and intellectual homage. *Divine* truth cannot reach man except through the *mirror* of his understanding.* Beyond that reflection no mortal can go; and therefore *that reflection*, corrected from every distorting, self-seeking medium (to the utmost of each man's power, and of course with prayer to God) must be THE TRUTH which every one is bound to present and offer in language, for acceptance or rejection, to others. In having acted according to this rule, I cannot at all accuse or reproach myself. But nevertheless, it is very gratifying to one who knows his own weakness and liability to error, to possess

* Let reflecting Christians meditate on 1 Cor. xiii. 12, remembering to put "by means of a mirror," instead of "through a glass;" and "in hints or enigmas," instead of "darkly." See "Second Travels."

facts which prove that he has not been deceived in his hopes, or frustrated in his efforts.

This letter happened to come yesterday from Dublin, together with a printed proof (privately communicated) of a forthcoming answer, in the *Christian Examiner*, to my 'Letter on the Law of Anti-Religious Libel.'* The article itself is a very feeble production; but it shows badly-suppressed indignation raised by the lecture which I gave a man, unknown to me, but evidently ignorant and superficial, who conceals his mental deficiencies by a verbose style, and gives to his followers the notion of cleverness by the want of logical accuracy, which involves him in verbal fallacies, which, among weak minds, are readily mistaken for delicate and quick ingenuity. I find also by the same conveyance, that the Bishop of Ferns, who, under the signature S. N., wrote a very unmeaning pamphlet against John Search, has written an answer to my observations, which is to appear in the same periodical next month. This answer I expect to be still more assuming and contemptuous than the above-mentioned article. Though I can bear this and more in defence of what I think right, yet to such an invalid as I am, these attacks are unpleasant, because the public exhibition of personal dislike must always be painful, but especially to a man who has no external dignity to protect him, or advantages to make compensation for these disagreeables. But

[* Published in 1834.—8vo. pp. 106. An answer to some strictures upon it appeared in the same year.—8vo. pp. 36.]

to me it is more than compensation to have received, on the very day I wanted it most, such a proof as Pope's letter, of my having been useful to one, at least, of my fellow Christians, or fellow-men.

In regard to the Bishop of Ferns, I shall take this opportunity of recording that I endeavoured to treat him with all the respect due to his *age*, though, appearing as he did in a *disguise*, he had no right to expect the same tone of deference which I would have used if he had shown himself *in propria persona*. As it was, I had to answer, not an argument, but what might be called the *peevish and peremptory disapprobation* of a very old man, who is accustomed to send away what and whom he dislikes with that guttural sound which has unfortunately no better name than *a grunt*.

Redesdale, June 14th, 1834.

Seldom are truly Christian views proposed to the few who can or will perceive their superiority over the strange medley of false philosophy and superstition which makes up the Catechistical, Liturgical, and Articular Christianity of the great mass of professors of the Gospel, without even the most liberal and enlightened exclaiming,—Oh! but would you unsettle people's minds, and expose them to become infidels! Now to whom did Christ declare the most pure and elevated principle of religion which was ever expressed in human language?—To a poor Samaritan woman.—"Woman, believe me, that neither

in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem," &c. He was not afraid of removing at once all externals from the notion of divine worship.—But our wise men of the Church know better.

To the Rev. George Armstrong.

Redesdale, Aug. 7th, 1834.

My dear Sir,

I have this morning received your very kind and interesting letter of the 26th last; and, though it is impossible for me at this moment to take its contents into due consideration, I wish to acknowledge the receipt of your valuable observations without delay, in order to avoid even a temporary misunderstanding of my silence. In hearing the opinions of a candid man concerning my works and myself, I take a particular delight even when they tend to show that I am wrong. Even if your judgment were not so generally favourable to my works, I would heartily thank you for your remarks. For the present, however, I shall only say that I am not at all inclined to defend every incidental sentiment expressed in my Evidence against Catholicism. My love of truth, I trust, has been the same at all periods of my life; but my knowledge and experience must naturally have been less ten years ago, than I hope they are now. I never at any time believed that I had fully "attained" that Truth for which my heart will never cease to pant till it ceases to beat. On the contrary, I am sometimes surprised, when I remember the circumstances in which I wrote, when I first appeared before the English public as a Divine, that I did not take up much more from *established* opinions. I believe I said somewhere (you must know that I dislike looking into my own works) that when I returned to Faith in Christ, the Church of England appeared to me like the renovated house of my youth. It is unfortunately too true. The scholastic system to which that name of the

Church of England is usually given, is too similar indeed to that in which I was brought up. It was therefore natural that, when I found my trust in Christ revived, I should glide into that scholastic superstructure which for many years had been familiar to my mind. Much, indeed, of the PRIEST revived in me; I feel thankful to the guiding hand of Providence that it was not more. But I must stop for the present.

Nothing but the absolute impossibility of accepting your kind invitation to your house, would induce me to send an excuse. But you must know that the state of my health is such as to prevent my dining with my domestic friends, when they have a party. An internal complaint, from which I have suffered very much for many years, has reduced me to such a debility, that even conversation exhausts me. I cannot travel even a few miles without inconvenience; and when the Archbishop and all his family went over to Wales a few weeks ago, for the sake of the children's health, I was obliged to remain in solitude, though the greatest comfort I have in life is the company of these dear friends. Many, many thanks for your kindness.

I am engaged in a work entitled *Heresy and the Inquisition.* I doubt whether my remaining strength is equal to the labour of such an undertaking. But I shall leave the event to Providence.

Believe me, with feelings of sincere respect and Christian love,

My dear Sir,

Yours ever faithfully,

J. BLANCO WHITE.

To the Rev. George Armstrong.

Redesdale, Aug. 31st, 1834.

My dear Sir,

Increased bodily indisposition has hitherto prevented my reconsidering the interesting contents of your eloquent and

powerful letter of July 26th last: and I much regret that the difficulty in which I find myself here of getting a frank, and still more the state of my health, will not allow me to give anything approaching to a detailed answer to every one of your observations which might seem to require it. I must therefore content myself with giving you this proof that your letter has deeply engaged my attention, and that by the short and hurried acknowledgment which I made of it, I did not intend to put the subject aside. I must begin by apologising for having given you the name of *Unitarian*, though, I can assure you, that name was never used by me as a reproach. Even under the return of that portion of the *priestly* spirit which I suffered when, with the purest intentions, I took the pen against Catholicism, I could not acquiesce in the theological opinion of those who deny to Unitarians the name of Christians. I am not aware that any expression in my controversial writings contradicts this sentiment. If it should be otherwise, I must have been betrayed into language which had not its source in myself: it must have been an unintentional adoption of that *established* phraseology of the generality of Divines, against which a man in my peculiar circumstances could not well be upon his guard. Aware of this danger (though too late to have avoided it) I lately published a corrected edition of my *Poor Man's Preservative*, and if my life and remaining strength are spared for some time, it is my intention to examine *The Evidence against Catholicism*, and leave behind me such notes, as, at a future time, (if ever another edition should appear,) may be necessary to retract and efface whatever traces of my original school of theology shall be found in the work. I feel a particular reluctance to read my published works over again; but I will not spare myself whatever trouble and discomfort may be necessary for my RETRACTATIONES.

I must, in the next place, acknowledge that my words, "the side to which I belong," are naturally open to the

friendly censure you have passed upon them. But all I meant by that unmeasured expression was, that I do not belong to that class of Divines who are commonly called Unitarians. To the Church of England, as a political body, I certainly do not belong: much less do I belong to that numerous portion of her clergy, who, under the name of Orthodoxy, cherish a most intolerant and bigoted spirit. In the preface to the "Second Travels," I have stated in what sense I belong to the Church of England. Of the intolerant spirit which prevails among many of its members, I had no idea, when I first appeared as a theological writer. Experience—bitter experience—made me gradually acquainted with the real state of things in the Church; and my residence in this country has finally disclosed the whole of the evil before my eyes. Under the impressions which my mind has lately received, I would not continue my connection, slight as it is, with the Church, if I knew any other to which I could find no serious objection. It is true (as I have more than once declared to my friends) that my theological studies have been for several years carried on in the *spirit* of the Divines commonly called Unitarians and Rationalists. But though my independence of mind is equal to theirs, my conclusions differ from those which are avowed in their congregations (as far as I know them), very substantially. I believe that if I were twenty years younger, I should be very much inclined to open a chapel of my own, and avoid the giving it any *denomination*, besides that of *Christian*. But it is evident that my course cannot be far from its end. Whatever powers are left me, I am, however, determined to employ in writing against the Spirit of *Orthodoxy*—that bane of the Christian Church, which began to corrupt it almost in the time of the Apostles themselves. I cannot conclude without suggesting to you how desirable it would be that the Ministers of the Gospel, called Unitarians, should avoid *Dogmatism*, or positive doctrines about the *mere humanity* of Christ, leaving the subject in the state in

which it is unquestionably found in the Scriptures. I say *unquestionably*, though I imply a doubt which many Unitarians do not entertain, because it cannot be denied that to settle the question of the *nature* of Christ by setting texts against texts is utterly impracticable in regard to the mass of Christians. That Providence intended to leave the subject in that undefinable state, is to me *a fact*, proved by the *balancing* tendency (if I may use the expression) which I observe in the New Testament. Why should we not leave it so? There is another point of the utmost importance to the progress of truly *liberal* Christian theology: the acquiescence of Unitarians in the practice of worshipping the One God in Christ. This I conceive to be independent of the metaphysical questions on the two Natures. To me it is enough to hear Christ say that men should worship him as they worshipped the Father: and that he and his Father are one. I say that this is enough to justify the practice of addressing ourselves to God incarnate—by which I understand God united with Christ *in regard to us*, without defining the manner of the Union. If to do this were unchristian, I cannot conceive that the Scriptures of the New Testament would leave such an opening to the practice.

I have written in a state of great weakness, and I beg you to make allowances accordingly. It is at all times most difficult to make oneself understood upon these subjects; but much more so when deep attention is painful, and when what would require a volume must be reduced to the limits of one sheet of paper.

With earnest prayer for light from above to you and to me, and in the spirit of Christian fellowship, I remain,

My dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours,

J. Blanco White.

P.S.—I have never read anything of Dr. Channing, except his Sermon on the Christian Evidence, which has been published in Spanish at my suggestion. We go to Dublin

in November. If during the winter you should happen to be in town, it would give me great pleasure to see you at the Palace.

Redesdale, September 23rd, 1834.

I feel like Jonah under the withered gourd. I am very near the end of my life's day—and what have I done? What have my endeavours to oppose corrupt Christianity produced? Nothing that I can perceive, but my own weariness of spirit, and my *mental* solitude—for I have no one with me. Yet God knows what is best. I place my poor exertions and the sorrows which have attended them in his hands. I do not regret the origin of all—my determination to quit my country. I approve that resolution more and more; the consciousness of having loved truth, and detested dissimulation, is worth what I have endured, what I endure, and much more.

My excellent friend, the Archbishop, probably from having heard that my fifth Letter on Heresy and the Inquisition is too violent against Priesthoods, has endeavoured to give me advice on this point, and has done it with every possible precaution not to appear to do so. He was mentioning this morning how necessary it is to be on one's guard against reviving early prejudices; and instanced this in my own case, who having conceived a great horror of Bishops and Priests in my youth, am apt to give way to the same feeling when anything calls it forth in my old age. That such a feeling has revived in me very actively,

is certain. But is this the effect of prejudice or of experience? I became thoroughly acquainted with the original priesthood who raised their authority upon Christianity. This familiar and most accurate knowledge made me abhor an institution, which converts men into instruments of the greatest evils with which my life has made me acquainted. I fled from that Priesthood; came to England; found another Priesthood, which appeared to me to have succeeded in avoiding whatever is odious and fatal in the Romish Clergy. The deep impressions which I had derived from my experience in regard to the Romish Priesthood were softened by this more recent impression. I considered my horror of *all* Priests in the light of a prejudice, and took my place among the Protestant Clergy. Here a second course of experience has made me perceive that the Protestant Priesthood is very far from being free from the mischievous tendencies which made me quit my country; that in spite of the principles which alone could justify the Reformation, in spite of political freedom, the Protestant Clergy, as a Priesthood, are (I do not speak of every individual) bigoted, intolerant, jealous of mental progress, and deliberately opposed to every thing which is not calculated to keep the mass of the people in a state of pupilage to *the Church,* that is, *a union of Priests.* I have seen this clearer and clearer every day, and my residence in Ireland has shown to me the whole extent of the evil. Now, are my present feelings revived *prejudice,* or confirmed *experience*?

My impressions of the character of the Priesthood among Roman Catholics were certainly not prejudices. Did not I, on the contrary, *prejudge*, when I persuaded myself that a *Priesthood* did not contain the same seeds of evil under the form of a Protestant Church? Experience tells me, I did.

Redesdale, Oct. 8, 1834.

I cannot omit, what I think a duty,—entering here a most important testimony of my experience. Never before, during the course of my life, have I felt anything approaching to the heartfelt conviction which I now have, especially at certain times, that the spirit of Christ is "poured abroad in my heart." Never was I more certain of the fact that I am nothing without the assistance of that divine spirit—that *moral influence* (of its physiology I know nothing) which Christ has promised to those who give themselves up to him by TRUST (Faith). Never did I value so much the comfort which may be derived from those passages of Scripture, to which that Spirit bears witness in my spirit, that they are his own. And when does all this happen?—When after a long and painful struggle with the formidable difficulties of the theological theory of Inspiration, I have totally rejected that theory. It is the work of the spirit of God, that that theory has not made me a more settled unbeliever than I was in my younger days. Oh that

I could convey to the Christian world the truth of Christianity as it is now impressed upon my mind. But I am nothing,—I wish to be nothing but what God's Providence has intended me for. May that good Providence lead me, during this latter portion of my life, so that I may not seek myself, but the glory of God, and the good of my fellow Christians—nay, of all mankind—if not in action, in patience and prayer. Amen.

Dublin, Dec. 1, 1834.

I enter this Memorandum with much pain. *——

I had given to ——— my MS. translation of Neander's Pamphlet on the Free Teaching of Theology, and it lay this morning on the breakfast table. When the Archbishop came in, I expressed my sincere regret that, owing to the desire of putting it in his power, when I publish anything, to say that he had not read it, and consequently is not answerable for any opinions expressed by me, I could not avail myself of his judgment, as I used to do formerly. He answered, "that there was no reason why I should keep my MSS. from him, for he had always maintained that the person who consults is not bound to follow the advice given to him." And then he added, "But, of course, I should not like you to publish anything too *radical*." These were nearly the words —of the sense I am certain.

Now, in this answer there was nothing but what I

'myself had constantly before my own mind: and yet when I heard the very idea which has been for a long time giving me a secret uneasiness, it seemed as if what had been only a dream, had suddenly become a reality. And what a heart-breaking reality it is to me!—Must I then reduce myself to publish only what may be allowed (with the utmost latitude of *clerical* liberality) to come out of an Archbishop's Palace? This is my present condition. My friend's liberality of principle exceeds very much the limits which his brother bishops can possibly allow. But must I spend the last days of a life devoted to mental independence, under any such restraint? Am I doing my Duty? Am I not concealing the ultimate results of my studies and experience, just when they may be supposed to have arrived at the utmost maturity of which they may be capable? It is true that all may be error and delusion: but can I help it? Have I not employed every means in my power to arrive at Truth, according to the extent of my abilities? Is it not my duty to lay that Result of my whole existence before my fellow men, and let *them* judge? But, alas! must I quit such dear friends as the Whatelys? Must I tear myself even from this circle of more than relatives,—from the Archbishop himself, who is more kind than any brother could be to me?

Such is the moral, practical problem which I have now to solve,—unless *death* comes in time to cut the knot. May God assist me! Amen.

To the Rev. George Armstrong.

Palace, Dublin, Dec. 8th, 1834.

My dear Sir,

Your manuscript will be welcome whenever it arrives. I am now constantly in the Palace, Stephen's Green, and I repeat what I said in my last letter—if you should happen to be in Dublin I shall be happy to see you. As my bodily weakness prevents my being out any considerable time, you may be almost sure that you will find me at home.

I had some time ago written an account of myself till my arrival in England, with an intention that it should be published after my death. I am now compiling a *history of my mind*, which, if I live to finish it, will complete my Memoirs.

I do not know whether it is in our power (I believe it is not) to express ourselves *dogmatically*, i. e. *positively*, upon the person of our Saviour, so as to be able to agree. But there are a number of *negative* points, i. e. points respecting which our duty seems to be to declare our ignorance, on which our opinions evidently do not differ. I have a little work in MS. to prove that Christianity does not consist in *Orthodoxy*—but I am doubtful whether to publish it by itself or to wait till I can compile the History of the Inquisition, to which it is the introduction.

I thank you for the truly Christian prayer with which your letter concludes. With similar good wishes in regard to yourself, I remain,

My dear Sir,

Yours ever faithfully,

J. Blanco White.

To the Rev. George Armstrong.

Palace, Dublin, Dec. 21st, 1834.

My dear Sir,

In proportion as your mind unfolds itself before me in your letters, my own feels an irresistible tendency to hold

communion with you. I was going to say—to open itself to you—but as I never wear a disguise or withhold my *convictions* in regard to those truths which are of the first importance to mankind, I cannot use that expression. In your excellent letter, dated Nov. 25–30, 1834, I find that you, very naturally, suppose me to hold certain doctrines—such as the distinction of Persons in the Deity—which I have long discarded. I have not had an opportunity of expressing this conviction in the few and short letters which I have had the pleasure of addressing to you. No man can be more thoroughly convinced than I am of the perfect Unity of God, as well as of the absurdity of maintaining that Unity, together with the assertion that the Deity consists of three distinct minds; for the notion of Person essentially implies an acting mental principle. Having spent, or rather MIS-spent, a great part of my early life in the study of that original system of Theology from which the Protestants have borrowed the established doctrine of the Trinity, I know (perhaps better than most of those who in this country profess to teach that doctrine) all the logical quibbles by means of which the clearest dictates of Reason are obscured and evaded. But God forbid I should use such means of troubling or bewildering others, or myself. You may, and probably will ask why I have not spoken more openly in my printed works. I ask indeed myself that question every hour; and I cannot say that I can give a satisfactory answer. All I know is, that my conscience, though not quite at rest, does not yet reproach me. The problem, as a practical one, as one in which every circumstance peculiar to my case is to be considered, is attended with great difficulty and obscurity. I believe that no worldly fear or interest perplexes me. My fear is that of doing mischief by the very attempt to do service to the cause of Christianity. My convictions in regard to the *positive* side of the theological question are not clear or decided enough to urge me to an open declaration, which, besides the pain

it would give to the few who still love me, and supply the place of those friends from whom I separated myself in youth, would stamp me as an ill-disguised infidel, and afford a triumph to the supporters of Popery. If a second sacrifice is still demanded by Truth, my heart (I trust in God) will not shrink from it. I shall tear myself from those whose affection has struck roots in my heart.—I shall tear myself from them—and drop into my grave. But, as I do not close my eyes, or turn away from conviction, I consider myself bound to wait till that conviction becomes imperative. What I have already published, and the conduct I observe, prevent the supposition of my countenancing the errors which my judgment rejects. I must pray and wait for more light.—The observations which I made in a former letter—those on which your last chiefly dwells—are certainly of no great weight.

Your answer to what I said in regard to the *contending texts* is perfectly satisfactory. But I do not feel equally satisfied on the point of addressing Christ in prayer. I conceive my state of mind on that point is very much like that of Socinus and the Polish Brethren.

Would you allow me to send you, by coach, the original manuscript of my letters on Heresy and the Inquisition? You would find some difficulty in reading them with all the corrections which I was obliged to make. But it would give me great satisfaction to know your opinion, and to have your observations. I have a better copy of the first four, but it is in the hand of the friend to whom they are addressed. Let me have a line to say whether you will undertake the labour I propose to you.

May God assist your and my endeavours to know him, as he is revealed to us in Christ, and to devote ourselves heart and soul to him, in unity with his Son.

Ever, my dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. Blanco White.

Palace, Dublin, December 22nd, 1834.

I yesterday wrote a letter, declaring that my views in regard to the Scripture Doctrine respecting our Saviour, have gradually become Unitarian. The struggles which my mind has, for many years, gone through upon this point are indescribable. The final resolution as to a public declaration before my death, if after due consideration I should find the duty of such a declaration imperative, will be the most severe sacrifice to which the present state of Christianity has doomed me. The expressive and affecting allegorical picture of Jonah under the withered gourd presents itself repeatedly to my mind. I threw myself into a sea of troubles (not indeed to escape from a painful duty, but to perform that which I owed to truth and honesty), and I saw the Protestant Gourd rapidly growing over me as a shelter. In vain have I tended it with incessant care: it has withered, and though I do not feel "angry," I do certainly feel dejected even unto death. I ask myself, "Doest thou well to be *grieved* for the gourd?" Having found the unsubstantial nature of the showy gourd which the Protestant principle applied to rear up a Church Establishment which grew up "in a night" of imperfect knowledge and inherited prejudice, do I do well to be grieved because I must not enjoy its shelter—though it still appears luxuriant and vigorous in the eyes of the world? Should I not consider it as a privilege that I am enabled to see the worm at its root, and that, if my conviction of duty increases—

I shall probably bear witness to the world what I have seen, that they may look for a more enduring and fructifying plant under which to rest? Certainly. I do not indeed shrink from the additional external evils which a public declaration would bring upon me. That, in leaving the Archbishop's house, I shall find myself reduced as to every means of comfort which an infirm old man requires, I well know. But remove from that evil the pain of tearing myself asunder from the hearts which, in this family, have every day approached closer and closer to mine, and the renewed pressure of poverty, the newly to be felt narrowness of my means, will hardly give me a moment's uneasiness. Among the evils which Religion, represented as a *Sect* held together by the possession of certain metaphysical Doctrines, has so long inflicted on mankind, none is equal to that of the disturbance of friendship and affection. I have suffered more from that fatal power of what is called faith and piety than words can express. And yet how incurable that evil appears in spite of the monstrous unreasonableness by which it is supported and fed! If kind-hearted and truly friendly persons, whose affections are poisoned by intolerance, could bring themselves to consider the real state of things in such cases as mine, how easily they might avoid inflicting the most cruel distress! Alas, though I have never dissembled on religious points, I cannot conceal from myself that my horror of losing the affections of those who were well disposed in my

favour, has more than once enabled my feelings to disturb my judgment. A desire to requite kindness, by the gratification of the greedy appetite for conformity which exists in all religious people, has on several occasions made me turn away from strict reason, and give myself up to the guidance of that merely devotional feeling which has its main source in sympathy with others. If you once give yourself up, even in a slight degree, to mere sentiment, you put yourself in the power of every person who is a greater enthusiast than yourself. These surrenders, it is true, were never either complete or permanent. Reason which I never deposed from its Sovereignty over me, soon recalled me. Still these aberrations are a subject of regret to me, and have increased my pain whenever I found myself obliged, as it were, to disappoint those who had some ground to believe that I had been permanently gained over to their religious views. But what a blind unreasonable feeling is that in which this mass of suffering and error originates! Why should people consider themselves aggrieved and hurt, because my mind (even when I have tried my utmost) cannot agree with their opinions? Do not we agree on everything on which the moral happiness of man depends? Is not our friendship pure and disinterested?—"Yes, but how can I be a friend to one who is an enemy to my Saviour?"—An enemy! When you shall find that in order to gratify myself I have turned aside from the path of Duty he has pointed out to me,—then desert me, disown me.

But why should any one avoid me, or look upon me as a criminal, because in my eager search after Christian Truth, I have arrived at conclusions opposite to his own?

These considerations, however, might for ever be repeated without effect. "I am right, and you are wrong" is the answer. I believe therefore it would be more advisable to point out the true source of that perversion of the best feelings, which is so frequently shown by really pious persons. The horror entertained against the Unitarian arises from the notion that he degrades the Saviour. When such an impression is raised, no human friendship can be safe against its power: and were the impression true, nothing could be said against it. I have indeed been under its power in regard to myself—when my reason led me to the Unitarian view. In regard to others, that impression has had no unfavourable effect. Yet how perfectly groundless is the notion itself! It entirely arises from considering *Deity* as an attribute, or rather as an office or dignity. To degrade Christ from being God, to reduce him to a mere man, evidently implies that there can be more than one God, and that we will not allow some one to enjoy that dignity, together with the Father. How easily might this confusion of thought, and its melancholy consequences, be avoided by considering that if Christ be God, he must be *that identical God* whom the Unitarian worships, and for whose incommunicable honour he is so jealous. But if (as it must be

confessed to be possible) the Trinitarian is mistaken as to the sense of Scripture, and Christ is not God, those who pay him divine worship raise a man to God's throne. Which of the two is safer?

Alas that superstitious fear should be so powerful as to prevent this consideration, I will not say from changing the opinions of the Trinitarian, but from stopping his cruel uncharitableness!

Palace, Dublin, December 29, 1834.

I am very ill; yet I cannot omit the record of my sentiments, lest (what indeed would save me much pain) I should be removed from this world of suffering, before I have declared those sentiments explicitly and publicly.

I wish openly to separate myself from the Church of England. I am convinced that, in the present state of the world, that *political* establishment is most injurious to the progress of pure Christianity, with which the moral and intellectual progress of mankind is inseparably connected. A Society, under the name of a Christian Church, to which the State appropriates a large portion of the public property, on condition that it shall maintain a certain set of doctrines, *as the doctrines of the Gospel,* is a great evil to the country and to mankind at large. If this be not bribing, against the chances of pure religious Truth being universally accepted, I do not know to what I can give that name. It is not only bribing the present generation, but alluring a portion of every rising

one to put themselves into the hands of the *bribed*, in order to have their young minds so shaped and predisposed that they may accept the bribe in their turn, and so perpetuate whatever errors may exist in the *paid* religious system. How can any one who knows the liability of man to error, look without horror upon the *chance*, not to say the certainty, of thus enlisting the most insidious passions of man—pride, ambition, and the love of wealth—in the perpetuation of such false views as are likely to have been consecrated into dogmas by a few, not well-known men, who, in the midst of trouble, fear, and deeply-imbibed popish prejudices, originally compiled the Thirty Nine Articles? Even if they had been the result of the most wise, free, and mature deliberation of all the English Divines, they would be nothing but a human work, exposed to innumerable mistakes. Yet the asseveration of the Thirty Nine Articles is the only mark of identity which entitles the body of men called the Church, to the enjoyment of their revenues and honours. Nothing can be changed in that mark of identity, unless Parliament allows it. Can this be in conformity with Christ's purposes and intentions?

To this I must add, that I have no conscientious objection to an established or endowed Clergy. What I object to most strenuously is—*endowed religious tenets—paid Articles of Faith*—a human representation of Christianity, a peculiar interpretation of the Scriptures, secured by the attraction of wealth and honours, and, what is still worse, by the fear of desti-

tution which inevitably threatens every Clergyman who, without any other means of subsistence for himself and perhaps a large family, begins to doubt the truth of those Articles. This is what my conscience objects to. If it should be answered that there is no other possible mode of having a Church Establishment, let those who assert that impossibility get rid of the difficulty, if they can. The most violent opponents of Church Establishments could wish for no stronger objection, than that which the assertion of the impossibility involves: for in every conceivable moral question, to prove that any practical measure is inseparable from something wrong in itself, condemns the measure without appeal.

In case my wretched state of health should not allow me to leave the Archbishop's house, before I die—a removal which, owing to the more than brotherly kindness with which I am treated, will be more painful than death itself, yet a removal which in common delicacy and justice to him must precede my public separation from the Church of which he is one of the most conspicuous heads—I hereby solemnly declare that after a very long consideration and study of the subject, I am convinced that the Doctrine of the Trinity is not true: that, at all times, it must have been injurious to the Spirit of Christianity, and led many well-disposed persons into a disbelief of Christ, —that at the present stage of the human progress, and much more at those stages which must follow it, such a doctrine must oblige every thinking person,

who shall be persuaded that belief in it really made a condition of salvation by Christ, to renounce his religion as false.

To the Rev. George Armstrong.

Palace, Dublin, Dec. 30th, 1834.

My dear Sir,

I will not allow you to thank me for any extraordinary confidence in the communications I have made to you in regard to my religious views. That every thing I know of you, especially the tone of mind which your letters disclose, would induce me to trust you, is quite certain. But were you the most faithless man in the world, all you could do would be to publish my communications;—and that, you may be sure, I intend myself to do. As you may have perceived by my printed works, my mind has been preparing, for many years, for the resolution at which it has now arrived. The question with me has been whether there was not enough of truth in the Church to which I attached myself, to justify the very slight and distant connection which I have maintained with her for the last three years, and whether I might not allow the broad hints which the *Second Travels* contain, to be the only intimation of my state of mind in regard to her Trinitarian doctrines. But I am convinced that such inuendoes are not enough. I perceive more than ever that the Trinitarian doctrine ruins Christianity, and though my conviction may not weigh a feather in the balance of public opinion, my duty is, not to calculate that weight, but, like the poor widow, to throw in my mite. * * * * * * *

As I sincerely wish to have the observations of an able man, untinged with the common theological prejudices, upon my Letters on Heresy and the Inquisition, I take the liberty of sending you my MS. But I shall not take it ill if,

owing to your not being able to bestow the time and trouble required, you should return the MS. unread.

I have lately read Channing's Sermons, republished by Hunter. They are admirable: and yet Channing himself does not seem totally free from theological intolerance. Witness what he says against the English Unitarians. You must not suppose however that I am a Materialist, Fatalist, &c. &c. I only hold the *indifference* of these theories. I wish with all my heart they were entirely put aside. If any man really and sincerely believes in Christ, I will not inquire by what steps he approached Him. I thank God that in the struggles of my life I have a satisfactory proof that I love Jesus, the Son of God. Though from the dawn of my reason to the present period, when I am on the brink of the grave, the greatest sufferings of my soul have been inflicted in his name, I do not perceive my heart wavering in its attachment to Him. Through Him I know the Father, through Him I trust in God the Father for time and eternity.

Excuse whatever faults and obscurities there may be in what I have written; for I write under extreme weakness.

My dear Sir,

Yours ever truly,

J. Blanco White.

CHAPTER V.

EXTRACTS FROM JOURNALS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

1835.—Ætat. 60.

Letter to Dr. Whately.—[*From his Journal.*]

Palace, Dublin, Jan. 2nd, 1835.

My dear Archbishop,

I should prove myself unworthy of the more than brotherly friendship which for many years, and especially since the time when I became your inmate, you have shown me, if I were to conceal from you my present circumstances. I am under an imperative conviction, that it is my duty to publish the fact that I am a decided Anti-Trinitarian. I conceive I owe this to the cause of Christianity, which, in my opinion, is injured by the established Doctrine. I also think it my duty (a very painful one indeed) to declare myself against, not the endowment of a Clergy but, *the endowment of doctrines or Articles.* The first, the most distressing, and most inevitable consequence of the declarations which I intend to make in a Preface to my Letters on Heresy and the Inquisition, is my exclusion from the bosom of your family. To save you from every perplexity between your kindness and the demands of your situation in the Church, I intend to cross over to Liverpool, as soon as I receive an answer from my Spanish friend Zulueta, to whom I intend writing this day. The comparatively short distance of that place from Dublin, and the facility of a sea passage, will enable me to have the comfort of considering

my *best friends* as within reach; and, if at any time you should think it consistent with external propriety to invite me to Redesdale, I might without much difficulty have the happiness of revisiting that dear spot.

I have asked Dr. Field whether I might venture on an excursion to Liverpool with safety to my feeble health, and he is of opinion that the sea voyage may be beneficial. Of course he is not aware of the mental distress which must remove all chances of benefit from the voyage. It is enough that it has no tendency to increase my bodily sufferings.

I leave it to you to communicate the contents of this letter to Mrs. Whately, or to withhold them for a time. In the latter case I shall tell her, with perfect truth, that Dr. Field considers an excursion to the other side of the water as likely to improve my health, and that I am about to act according to that opinion.

I have carefully abstained from topics which might unnerve my heart, and move unnecessarily your sympathy, and will conclude under the same prudent restraint.

Yours, ever affectionately,

J. B. W.

To the Rev. George Armstrong.

Palace, Dublin, Jan. 6th, 1835.

My dear Sir,

On Friday next, the 10th, I intend to leave the Archbishop's Palace for Liverpool. The Archbishop, from whom I have not concealed the object of my journey, though evidently grieved to the heart, is kind and liberal enough to exact a promise that I will return to Redesdale next summer, on a visit to himself and family. As, *on my part*, there could be no objection to this, I fully hope to be able to fulfil my promise. God, who knows with what pain I tear myself from my friends, sees also how vehemently I have desired to spend the last days of my life among them.

But the demon of Orthodoxy must have victims; and I am ready.

I beg you will not hurry yourself about the MS. which I sent by coach a few days ago.

I implore God's blessing upon you. May his mercy support me in these my last trials.

Yours, ever sincerely,

J. Blanco White.

P.S. I fear I have never thanked you for your instrumentality in rousing me to a sense of my duty in regard to a Truth of the utmost importance, which, though I had fully examined, circumstances had not allowed to penetrate my heart.

Letter from the Rev. George Armstrong.

15, Belvedere Place,
Jan. 7th, 1835.

My dear Sir,

On receipt of your letter yesterday, I instantly determined on coming to Town this day. I have just arrived, and hasten to entreat the favour of an interview. Your reply to this perhaps might not find me in due time, so I take the liberty of saying I will inquire for you at the Palace at 3 o'clock this day.

It would cause me much anguish were a person, in shaping whose fortunes an inscrutable Providence has apparently permitted me to exercise a no slight influence, to leave the neighbourhood in which I lived without any opportunity afforded me of grasping his hand and exchanging benedictions in person, previously to his deeply-to-be-regretted departure. Believe me,

Ever most cordially, dear Sir,

Your devoted friend and servant,

Geo. Armstrong.

Palace, Dublin, Jan. 7, 1835.

I was attacked yesterday by a severe fit of bronchitis. Dr. Field succeeded in allaying it; and though I am extremely weak, he thinks I may venture to cross the Channel the day after to-morrow.

Deeply afflicted as I am, I really feel grateful that I have been found worthy to suffer for the CAUSE of truth and mankind. I say for the *cause* of truth, not for the truth, which, in religious points, I do not pretend to know better than others. But there can be no question that the cause of religious truth can be forwarded only by the honest declaration of every man's convictions. If all Christians had expressed the results of their study of the Scriptures, without fear, and free from every reserve and disguise, we should know what *impression* the Scriptures were *intended* to make on Christians in general. On the contrary, while both temporal and superstitious fears induce multitudes to repeat the impressions which the Scriptures made on the minds of some individuals in former times—while teachers are trained under an inflexible system of Orthodoxy—while they are engaged by solemn promises, which many consider as an oath, especially in the act of Ordination, to see nothing in the Scriptures but what confirms that Orthodoxy—and while shame, obloquy, in many cases attended with destitution for themselves and their families, await them, if they acknowledge to the world that, after a more deliberate consideration than that which they gave the point under the guidance

of tutors, and the inexperience of youth, they cannot find in the Scriptures the sense which the Church Articles fix—while such a system is kept up by Law, the *cause* of religious truth must be injured. Even if the Articles contained the purest essence of the Gospel, such an artificial support—a system of protection which would answer equally well in the case of the most erroneous doctrines—must cast a cloud of suspicion upon the tenets of the Church of England. I am indeed a foreigner, a man not brought up under the teaching of that Church, and these circumstances may, in the opinion of many, diminish or invalidate the weight of my testimony. Yet really Christian Churches should not forget, that in Christ Jesus there is no distinction of race or nation. Sincerely, though inconsiderately, and under the influence of unsuspected Popish prejudices, favourable to the English Establishment, did I join myself to that Church. For more than twenty years have I struggled within myself against the growing objections which, in the course of uninterrupted theological studies, I found against her doctrines. But old and infirm as I am, and strongly tempted by the affection of those with whom I live in the closest habits of friendship, not to break openly with a Church with which they are so identified as to have lost their choice of keeping an Unitarian as an inmate—I feel it my bounden duty to show, by my sufferings, to the world, how injurious to the cause of religion, of Christian charity, and of humanity itself,

that Church system must be, which makes such sacrifices to *the love of truth* unavoidable to me; and imposes on them the duty of acting towards an unoffending friend—a friend whose promise of not attempting to proselyte they would certainly trust—with the reluctant severity which their intimate connection with the Church Establishment demands. For the sake of opening the eyes of people to the evils of this kind of Orthodoxy, I trust in Heaven I should have fortitude enough to go to the gallows, or the stake.*

Palace, Dublin, Jan. 8, 1835.

"Take your religion from Paul, (said Dr. D——, this morning,) and read with humility: wait, and you will be instructed."

It is extraordinary that a clever, and in a certain sense, a liberal man, can utter these unmeaning phrases! Take your religion from Paul:—so I am very willing to do; and nevertheless I cannot agree in your Trinitarian tenets. "That arises from want of humility."—Humility towards whom? Do you wish me to be humble towards the written character printed in the book, or towards the sense which I find in the words which those characters bring to my mind?—Now, you are philosopher enough to acknowledge, that what we denote by 'sense' does not lie in the words themselves, any more than the perception

[* The Editor has reason to know, and thinks it a duty to state, that at this period a home was offered him by more than one of his friends, Clergymen of the Church of England.]

of colour in the object that excites it: we call by that name the notion which they raise in each mind. What notions were in the mind of Paul when he wrote each sentence is known to God,—but we cannot find it out with certainty. Paul, therefore, to each of us, is what we understand Paul to say. Humility, in regard to what we understand in Paul, means a proper deference for his authority, as an original Preacher of Christianity. This, I repeat, I am willing to pay. But is it proper deference to Paul, to understand him in such a way as no rational man could have wished to be understood? Is it humble deference to Paul, when he has expressly declared that to him there is but one God, namely, the Father, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, to assert, nevertheless, that Paul, according to other passages, meant by one God, two Gods; only that in Paul's language one is two or three, and two or three is one?

If Paul had given the least indication that he was using human language in this most extraordinary way, you might well desire me to be humble, and take my religion from Paul,—though this would be to desire me to renounce the first principles of reason, because (as you would say) there was *reason* to do so. But since this interpretation is not the sense of the words of Paul—i. e. the impression which those words make upon my mind, but absolute *nonsense*, which other men fasten on that Apostle—the humility which you recommend is of no avail, unless it means humility towards those men.

This is, in fact, the purport of that recommendation. Churchmen cannot divest themselves of the habits of deference to some authority, whose business it is to interpret for all the rest of Christians: they cannot help demanding humility, though frequently they do not know towards whom. "Wait," added Dr. D——. The meaning of this must be, hold fast the interpretation which you have been taught till you believe it. — "Wait!"—Where? Upon what ground? Upon your's? Or upon the Calvinist's, or upon the Roman Catholic's?—To which of these shall I give the advantage of my waiting?—Have I not waited long, upon your Catechism, which was forced word for word upon my infant mind? Have I not waited long during my nursery instruction? Have I not waited several hours, every Sunday, at Church, hearing the Church Prayer Book, and your long, long Sermons?—Am I to wait till I die?

Jan. 9th.

Waiting in anguish for the hour of departure.

Liverpool, Jan. 10th, 1835.
(At Zulueta's, 56, Seel Street.)

My whole Life has not had moments so bitter as those which I have experienced within the last half hour. Exhausted by the inconveniences of the sea-

passage last night, I laid myself down on a sofa after breakfast, and fell asleep for a short time. I awoke in that distracted state which a sudden transition from place to place frequently occasions, and it was with the greatest difficulty that I convinced myself of being in the house of my Spanish friend Zulueta. Now every circumstance of my painful situation crowded upon me, so that I could not bear up against the anguish of my heart. The whole of what had passed through my mind with such irresistible power, respecting my duty, appeared like a delusion—a dream—with my present misery, for all its reality. In this state I had to write a few lines to Mrs. Whately, and I thought my heart would break. How entirely I must cast myself on God's mercy for support! Has not some martyr, when already bound to the stake, been tried by the awful impression that he had been brought there by a delusion?—Was there not something of this horrible idea in Christ's mind when, having deliberately gone to the Garden, "which Judas knew," he thought three successive times that he might possibly have overruled the necessity of drinking the cup which he had now close to his lips? Oh, may his fortitude encourage me, and his spirit strengthen me! How much, indeed, I do want it!

Liverpool (Zulueta's house),
11th Jan. 1835.

I had some sleep Saturday night, and my mind

recovered part of its lost strength yesterday (Sunday). Last night I slept for a longer time, and more soundly, than I have for many months. This has entirely relieved me from that mental distress to which I have alluded. All my hopes of usefulness, by means of my present sufferings, as well as by those which I expect, have revived. My sense of duty is again attended with courage to perform it. My heart is full of gratitude to God, the Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, for this support in my utmost need. Blessed be his name!

25, Upper Parliament Street,
(Lodgings,) Jan. 20th.

My Confession of Faith consists of one proposition, that for asserting which Jesus of Nazareth was condemned to die. John xix. 7. "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, *because he made himself the Son of God*;" i.e. the Messiah, the representative of the Deity to all mankind. Matt. xxvi. 63, 64. "But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be *the Christ, the Son of God.* Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Whoever acknowledges this proposition, makes himself a subject of the kingdom of God, the spiritual kingdom of which Christ is the lawgiver, in the name

and under the authority of "his Father and our Father, his God and our God." To be a member, a spiritual subject of that kingdom, is to be a Christian.

My profession of Faith—the profession by means of which I ardently wish to see all mankind united into one Universal Church, is this:—"I believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of God; and as such, it is my fixed determination to conform to his will, which is the will of God, in every thing; according to the *spirit* of the Scriptures."

The same Day and Place.

Nothing cheers me in the whole world except the hope of being useful during the short time which, in all probability, is left to me. And yet I may say that "I hope against hope." To whom can I reasonably expect to be useful? To the Orthodox? Impossible; most, by far the most, of them are beyond the reach of any thing I can say. They will not read it, unless it be with the determination of cutting me up in some Review. To the Unbelievers? They will not take the trouble to read any thing upon the subject of Religion. Well, then, for whom shall I write, if I am preserved in sufficient strength for that purpose? I can hardly believe that Providence has led me through ways so unusual, in the world of mind, without some object. I am conscious of my extreme insignificance in the world. Independently of opinion and only according to my real powers, I should

not be surprised if all my sufferings and toils had no result whatever. Since, however, I am conscious of an upright intention—since my only wish is to promote God's truth as it is in Christ—I cannot be guilty of presumption in hoping that God will bless my endeavours in some way. I give my mite; let Providence give it an increase in value, if it be his will,—or let it be cast aside. The giver will certainly not be doomed to the same rejection. God's goodness and love, as I know them through Christ, are my sureties.

January 21st, 1835.

Of all my present trials, none is equal to that which arises from the efforts by which my friends are endeavouring to convince me that, far from being bound in conscience to declare my dissent from the Church of England, there is a duty incumbent upon me which requires my continuing, to all external appearances, in that Church. I cannot help looking around me in bewilderment and distress, as if I were on the point to ask myself—Is virtue, then, a phantom, and honesty an empty sound? Are the best men agreed in that view, and am I only a fanatic, who has taken literally, principles which were never intended to be strictly followed?

Jan. 23, 1835.

I wish that the few Christians who profess the Gospel in perfect independence of a human Confes-

sion of Faith or Creed,—that is, without a fixed standard of scriptural interpretation, settled at some particular period according to the notions of certain individuals—would agree to call themselves by some name unconnected with any disputed point of interpretation. I have no other objection to the name *Unitarian,* but that it is *dogmatic.* That the doctrine of the Trinity, and all those connected with it, such as *vicarious punishment,* &c., are injurious to the cause of Christianity, is a deep conviction of my mind. But, as it frequently happens to the human intellect, a happy want of logic, a useful inconsistency, allows those notions in many individuals to stand side by side with a most truly Christian spirit. Trinitarianism, and its scholastic train of doctrines, does not make much havoc among a certain kind of early-distorted minds within the Church; but it forms a formidable barrier between Christianity and the thinking mass of mankind. The Church—the Christian Society—which I wish to find on the increase in the world, as the source and promoter of a second Reformation, should be reminded by its denomination of the wide field of error which it has to oppose; should be directed, by its very name, against the fountain-spring of the corruptions which, for nearly as many centuries as measure the age of Christianity, have accumulated upon it. The true source of these corruptions is that "false philosophy" which, having begun to insinuate itself into the very heart of the Gospel, even in the time of St. Paul,

(Coloss. ii. 8,) went on usurping more and more the name of saving Faith, till it grew into that verbal and metaphysical system which is called School Divinity. The Confessions of Faith which chiefly divide the Christian world are purely School Philosophy, applied to the Religion of Christ. If the Scholastic system were better known, Anti-scholastic Christians might be a very good denomination for those who are now called Unitarians and Rationalists. I wish some word expressing individual independence from any self-constituted interpreter of the Scriptures, could be found. Perhaps *Anti-Sectarian,* (understanding the word Sect in its original meaning, of a philosophical system or school,) or *Unarticled* Christians, would do. The latter has a smack of vulgarity, —but it would be understood by John Bull.

To the Rev. George Armstrong.

25, Upper Parliament Street, Liverpool,
Jan. 24th, 1835.

My dear Sir,

I have now been here a whole fortnight, and am thankful that my mind and spirits begin to recover from the painful trial which I have endured during the last month. It is true that the mistaken kindness of my friends has not yet ceased to aggravate my sufferings; but this is perfectly natural, and exactly what I had prepared my heart to meet. I now ardently long to be employed in preparing the MS. which I left with you, for the Press. I do not wish to hurry you; but if you have examined already any considerable part of it I should be glad to have it sent over im-

mediately ; the rest might follow it at your own convenience. I intend to write a fifth Letter declaring the change which has taken place in me, and my reasons for it. But I cannot begin that Letter till I have refreshed my recollection of the preceding ones, in order that all may be in proper keeping. I beg you will direct the parcel as I desired before, at Messrs. Zulueta and Co., 56, Seel Street, Liverpool. It will by this means come safer, than if directed to me, who am a stranger.

It is curious that, in Dublin, I had made the acquaintance of part of an Unitarian family who live in this town. I was not, however, aware of their tenets till I came here. The mother of the family, Mrs. Martin, is a woman of the most unbounded benevolence. She knew me by name, and was desirous of making my acquaintance. It is by her kind exertions that I have found lodgings near her house. Through her, also, I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Mr. Yates, an Unitarian Minister in London, who happened to be in Liverpool a few days ago. Mrs. Martin has also informed me of Mr. Martineau's intention of calling upon me. If my daily sufferings should not be above average to-morrow, I intend to hear him in his Chapel. From what I have observed it appears to me that Unitarians do not like that name. I am sorry to perceive a shyness on that point; but my observation is extremely limited, and I must not draw general conclusions. I wish, indeed, there was a name less expressive of Controversy and opposition, and more comprehensive of the objects which Christians who profess the Gospel according to the Liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, should always have in view. As unfortunately the Christian world is divided into *Sects*, i. e. theological schools, perhaps it might be desirable to oppose that practice by the adoption of the name *Unsectarian Christians*; thus conveying the idea that whatever may be the theological system of individuals, all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and firmly

propose to obey the Will of God, as we know it through his son, may join in Christian communion. I do not mean, of course, to propose this as a practical measure; I only state it, as one of those wishes which cross the mind, and vanish the moment after, under the impression of that long and painful experience of the power of prejudice and habit, which I have had during a long life of struggle with established opinions. *Unarticled Christians* has a smack of vulgarity, else I would prefer it as more intelligible to the mass of the people in this country.

I write early in the day, and it might happen that in the course of it I should hear from you, without being able to let you know it. But you will, no doubt, allow me to trouble you with another letter as soon as I receive the expected parcel. Believe me, with sincere esteem,

My dear Sir,

Yours, ever faithfully,

J. Blanco White.

Sunday, Jan. 25th.

I have this moment returned from the Unitarian Chapel, Paradise Street, (the first time that I ever was in a dissenting place of worship,) and feel highly gratified. After so very long a period of contradictory and clashing feelings and notions as I have endured at Church, it is quite refreshing to be in a place of worship where nothing has revolted my mind. The simplicity of the whole service, aided by the effect of some most beautiful hymns sung with great taste, was delightful to my mind. The prayers of the Minister* were very good; and though the Sermon, chiefly on moral obligation, laboured under the

[* Rev. J. Grundy.]

essential mistake which lies at the bottom of Paley's System, it could not fail to be useful, by leading even the commonest minds to think upon a subject which is closely united with every man's intellect, and hardly requires any other sources of information than those which every one may discover in himself, under the assistance of the Gospel. What an enormous mass of prejudice would be removed, if persons who wish to be candid would "come and see!" I am quite certain that my dear friend ——, had she been present, would have been delighted with the Unitarian service. She would not have heard a word of controversy, and her mind would not have had to turn away, as I know it does every Sunday at Church, in disgust at one half of the Prayers and Sermon.

In the midst of my sufferings I raise my heart to God in thankfulness, for the strength he has given me to take this resolution. Far, indeed, from finding myself inclined to expect those feelings of approbation from the people who see me unexpectedly among themselves—those feelings which the Archbishop reckons among the temptations which may have deceived me—the state of my mind is one of humiliation. I am conscious that all people in this country, with hardly any exception, set the highest value on what they call consistency. The country being perpetually in a state of political warfare, and, as it were, brigaded and regimented for that purpose, nothing commands such universal respect as faithfulness for every one's respective colours. Truth being quite

out of the question, a man in my circumstances can expect nothing but contempt, even from those to whom I give the support of my opinion. This conviction is so strong, that, instead of having to be on the watch against pride and vanity, I have to exert myself against false shame. But God knows the heart, and it is his approbation which I humbly strive to obtain, as a disciple of his Son Jesus Christ.

To the Rev. Dr. Hawkins, Provost of Oriel, Oxford.

Liverpool, Jan. 27, 1835.

My dear Provost,

The turn which my theological opinions have been taking for some years has lately led me into a state of conscientious conviction, which I must obey, despising what the world will call shame, and what, in my inmost heart, is most agonizing pain. I subscribed the 39 Articles, more than twenty years ago, with perfect sincerity. My subsequent studies very much disturbed the notions which had led me to the Church of England. In 1819, I had so far become an Unitarian that, as that time some of my Oxford friends had thoughts of obtaining for me an Honorary Master's degree, I wrote to William Bishop, desiring him to stop proceedings which might procure me an honour, of which, according to the opinions of those who were to confer it, my theological views had made me unworthy. An impulse of mere feeling, arising from the early religious habits of my mind, made me again close my eyes to all difficulties, and I thought that, under certain verbal modifications, I might continue in the Church. My controversy with the Roman Catholics renovated the impressions of my original theological studies (impressions equally favourable to the Churches of England and Rome), as well as somewhat of

the character of the Priest, and consequently of the High Churchman. Now I conceived that my orthodoxy had been fixed on a steady foundation; but it was not so. As I never allowed myself *to put opinions upon the shelf*, as settled for ever, my uninterrupted study of the Scripture, and of every thing within my reach, that could help me to understand it, sapped again the basis of my orthodoxy. The state of my mind was pretty clearly displayed in "The Second Travels of an Irish Gentleman;" but it was not till lately that I became convinced that it was not my duty to continue externally a member of a Church, most of whose Articles I internally rejected. The leading principle of my life has been, *not to deceive, either by word or deed.* In obedience to this principle, I became a voluntary exile at the age of five and thirty: in conformity with it I have torn myself away from those dear friends who were the comfort of my infirm old age. I must show myself to the world just as I am, and this cannot be done, with any degree of propriety, by the inmate of an archbishop.

There is still another painful separation to which I must submit. I do not conceive that you, as head of Oriel College, could allow a professed Anti-Trinitarian to be one of its members. To spare you, therefore, the painful necessity of excluding me, I beg that you will take my name off the College books. My heart is deeply affected as I resign the external honour which I most valued in my life: but I should prove myself unworthy of ever having belonged to your Society, if I could act deceitfully towards it.

Your personal friendship, my dear Provost, will ever be most dear to me; and I am sure that you will not deprive me of any portion of it.

Farewell, my dear friend, and may God, as I trust, unite us where we shall see him face to face, free from the clouds of opinion which now float between us.

Yours ever gratefully and faithfully,

J. B. W.

Jan. 30th, 1835.

After hearing how sore my friends continue on the subject of my separation from the Church, I have taken, as usual, a walk in the cemetery. Sitting very tired among the tombs, the following thought occurred to me in connection with the subject :—

He who deceives, injures mankind;

By not separating myself from the Church of England, I should deceive;

Therefore, by not separating, I should injure mankind.

Which of the premises could they deny, or how avoid the consequences? But alas! how deep and disguised lie some of our moral faults. I apply the observation to myself, as well as to others. Kind and excellent friends seem to take a delight in saying to me—that *I have given a mortal stab to my usefulness.* Secret feeling does not allow them to perceive that what leads them to say so, is the desire of giving me a stab: for I have already taken a decided step, and that observation can have no effect but that of adding to my sufferings. Were they to ask themselves what is it they wish me to do, or to have done, perhaps they might see their error. Do they think that I have acted according to my conscience, or against it? The latter is inconceivable; but if I have acted according to the dictates of my conscience, do they wish I had acted against them? Do they wish that the *stab* should be given to my conscience, instead of

to my usefulness?—Can a man with a wounded conscience be useful?

To the Provost of Oriel College, Oxford.

Jan. 31, 1835.

My dear Provost,

I think it due to your kindness to acknowledge the letter which I received from you yesterday evening. I sincerely thank you for every sentiment expressed in it, and for the freedom with which you express your estimate both of my natural character and my writings. Whatever may appear to the contrary, I never have entertained a high notion of myself. Perhaps, under more favourable circumstances, I might have been a useful man. But I have acted to the best of my knowledge: and I thank God that I have the approbation of my conscience in point of honesty and sincerity. In regard to the present case, if my acting without disguise were to produce no other effect than the exhibition of that *martyrdom* which you wish me to avoid, if it did no other service to mankind than that of disclosing the intolerant spirit which punishes a Protestant Christian for telling openly what sense the Scriptures convey to his mind, I should think that my sufferings were far from being thrown away. I am not ignorant of that, not very common, temptation which makes men court trouble, pain, and things worse than death. But I have honestly consulted my conscience, and do not conceive that such a feeling influences my conduct. If from that unsteadiness which you conceive to belong to me, I should ten times change my views, I would as many times avoid disguise. The day, however, will arrive, when you will be convinced that the present state of my religious views is not the result of a transient feeling. But I surrender at discretion. I will not stand up for my own intellectual honour.

Do as you please in respect to leaving or taking off my

name. I have done what I conceived to be my honest duty on that point; and I thank you for the intention of keeping my letter as an attesting document.

I do not intend to leave Liverpool. The circumstance of its being a mercantile town, and my having only two or three persons who know me here, will keep me as much as possible out of the immediate contact of that intolerance, which would spare me only at the price of my honesty.

God bless you, my dear friend.

Ever yours, gratefully and sincerely,

J. B. W.

Sunday, Feb. 1st, 1835.

The service at the Unitarian Chapel, Paradise Street, has given me the most unmixed delight. I did not find a word that I was inclined to oppose, a sentiment which I wished to correct. Mr. Martineau is a young man of surprising talents, and, what is still more, of surprising judgment and soundness in his views. His Sermon was a beautiful discourse on *Principle*—where he displayed a deep acquaintance with Moral Philosophy. Yet there was no part of the discourse which the humblest of his hearers might not be improved by, if he listened with attention. But I had no conception of the power which Sacred Poetry, full of real religious sentiment, and free from the mawkish mysticism which so much abounds in some collections, can exert over the heart and mind. My friends would attribute the unbounded approbation which I have given to the whole service, to the influence of music; but they would be much mistaken. The share of the music in pro-

ducing that impression was comparatively slight; for the performance was only correct, so as not to spoil the general effect. Oh, that it were possible that some of those friends would "come and see!" How much their unjust prejudices would be softened; how clearly they would perceive the most unquestionable marks of seriousness and devotion, in a congregation to which they deny the name of Christian! How evidently they might perceive, (if with a sufficient knowledge of the present state of the human mind they would silence their own prejudices,) that if Christianity is to become a living Power in the civilized parts of the world, it must be under the Unitarian form. But they will not (indeed, owing to their moral and worldly fetters, they cannot) form correct ideas of what already is *in existence*, in the way of religious improvement. They examine only the phantoms of their imaginations: they see the Unitarian there, and no where else. They bewilder themselves (the best of them, I mean,) in contriving plans for the establishment of a comprehensive worship: yet they might see it already in operation. The Unitarian worship at which I have been present might be joined in by the strictest Trinitarian, provided he did not think it essential to make the profession of his opinions a part of the praises of God. The truly *tolerant* of all denominations might worship in this manner, without in the least compromising their tenets. The Unitarian worship stands on ground which all Christians hold as sacred. What

strikes me most of all is, what I might call the *reality*, the true connection with life which this worship possesses. All that I had practised before seemed to lie in a region scarcely within view. It was something which I forced myself to go through, because I had persuaded myself that it would be good for the soul; yet, like an unintelligible and partly revolting charm, it only fatigued, but did not touch, the mind, except here and there, when the prayers descended from the clouds of theology, and did not adopt the slavish language of Eastern devotion. But here the prayers, the whole worship, is a part of my real life. "I pray with my spirit, I pray with my understanding also." May I not say that, suffering every hour from the bleeding wounds of my heart, those wounds that even my friends touch roughly, I have been already rewarded for acting in conformity with principle? I believe my faith in Christ is stronger—it has more *reality*, it is more a part of my being—not detached, loose, an appendage, hanging on, and almost in the way of real life—but like an articulated limb, adding strength to the whole of my moral being.

February 2nd, 1835.

In the infancy both of each man and of mankind, conviction by reasoning is very difficult, and, if produced, very feeble. The convinced child forgets his conviction in a moment: so it happens with all persons who have not thoroughly practised and applied

their mental faculties; so again we see it, whenever disease or low spirits weaken those powers. The only way to convince persons and nations who are in that infant state of mind is, awe and astonishment. Hence the establishment of all religions by miracles. The agreement of all nations on this point is remarkable. But can it be supposed that God would make his only true religion, Christianity, depend for ever, chiefly on the astonishment produced on people who lived ages ago? Even if miracles were performed *now*, their effect would fall very short of that which they produced eighteen centuries ago. But the fact is, that they are not performed, and they have not been performed since the human mind began to acquire a *collective* maturity, as if Providence wished to show that they are not the best means of conviction. Yet Divines insist on related miracles as the best and soundest foundation of Christianity.

February 3rd.

Having received my original MS. of the Letters on Heresy and the Inquisition from Ireland, where I had left it, in the hands of the Rev. George Armstrong, of Kilsharsvan, Drogheda, I wish, in order to prevent its being lost, to copy the prayer which I wrote on the first page before I began the work. I value it, because it is both an attestation of the intentions and desires with which I took the pen, and a monitor to keep me faithful to the same views.

Prayer written at Redesdale, near Dublin, May 10th, 1834.

O God, the Father of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through whom I have been brought to the full knowledge of thee, and whom I acknowledge as my moral king, thy Anointed; hear my prayer. When on the point of beginning an undertaking which, if brought to a conclusion, may be of some consequence among Christians, I am most anxious to impress my mind with a deep sense of duty and responsibility to Thee. I write for the instruction of my fellow Christians—grant me light, that I may not lead any one into error! I write to assist in removing corruptions closely interwoven with every part of Christianity, as it exists externally:—grant that I may not injure any portion of its true spirit and substance! It is my sincere wish to do good, independently of every advantage, and in spite of every disadvantage, which may arise to me from this work. Grant it thy blessing, or prevent its existence, according as it may assist, or injure, the progress of Christ's true Gospel! Amen.

To the Provost of Oriel, Oxford.

Liverpool, Feb. 7th, 1835.

My dear Provost,

I cannot express how deeply I feel the kindness which every line of your last letter breathes. There was indeed no necessity for an explanation. I am quite sure that you could not say anything with an intention of mortifying me,

but it is the inevitable consequence of that principle of orthodoxy which makes certain abstract doctrines identical with saving faith, to poison the nearest and the dearest relations of social life. The martyrdom to which I alluded originates in that principle. In Spain it used to produce, chiefly, bodily suffering—in England it occasions anguish of spirit, and unmerited degradation in the opinion of the large public who cherish that principle. You, very naturally, regret my loss of that beloved resting place which I thought I should enjoy till I dropped into my grave. But see the effects of the intolerant principle. I am obliged to save my friend, the Archbishop, all perplexity between his affection to me, and his official deference to the intolerance of orthodoxy, by excluding myself from his society, and that of his family. The pain which this step has given me, is greater I can assure you than that which I felt when I quitted Spain. Old age clings very fast to the consolations of a life, which has enjoyed none of those which are commonly granted to men of my condition.

You say, with great truth, that some friendships will be clouded and disturbed in regard to myself.—And why?—Of what offence am I guilty?—How have I proved myself less worthy of those friendships? By that unpardonable crime of using my own judgment in the interpretation of the Scriptures. The time will come, I am sure, when English Christians will be ashamed of the age when their ancestors were guilty of such injustice; and if my sufferings, by showing practically the existing evil, may hasten that period, I will rejoice in my Martyrdom.

You say, very truly, that you are in ignorance of the circumstances of my heterodoxy. All I can tell you within the compass of a letter is, that my present theological convictions are of a very long standing. The only conviction which was wanting, till lately, is that of my being bound to publish the results of my studies and experience before my death. My Note Books attest the long and frequently

resisted process by which I have gradually rejected the doctrines of the Trinity, the Atonement in the sense of vicarious suffering, and Original Sin; in a word, the whole Patristical system of theology. With respect to the divinity of Christ, I had, during the greatest part of my residence in Ireland, silenced my conscience by means of those verbal evasions, which afford a shelter to some really conscientious, but doubting, persons in the Church. But I was convinced of the flimsiness of the Sabellian and indwelling Systems, shape them and modify them as you will; and loving Christ, who died to bear witness to the truth, from my heart, (else I would not endure my present distress,) I have thought it my duty to avoid in my conduct all direct or implied deception. I do not separate from the Church, for the purpose of making converts. You will find very little advocacy of Unitarianism in the work which I am preparing. The question between Unitarians and Trinitarians can receive no accession of light, either from me or from any man. Neither Whately, nor Copleston, can add a single view to those, with which the study and meditation of many years have made me familiar. When you advise me to consult them, you should remember that ten years of my early life were employed in a regular study of Orthodox divinity upon those points, and that though thousands among you exceed me in abilities, few are likely to be so well acquainted with the sources of the Orthodoxy they profess. The whole of what Newman has worked out for his last publication * has been quite familiar to me, since my youth. Add to these early theological studies, twenty years in England of incessant attention to these points, and a daily study of the Greek Testament with every collateral assistance within my reach. What then could I expect from the two men you recommend, eminent as they are? Only the fatigue, and that almost unavoidable irritation which the discussion of these subjects produces. I have

* The Arians of the Fourth Century.

examined the question in every possible way; yet that which has always had the most powerful effect upon my mind, is the *collective* result of the study of the Greek Testament. You know very well that such collective impressions cannot be conveyed in argument.

Nor is dissent upon doctrines what chiefly separates me from the Church. My most insuperable objection arises from the bondage, in which the law of the land keeps the Church upon points of belief. If the Church were free, if it could revise and improve its creed, perhaps I should not have felt it necessary to recal the solemn subscription which I made to its Articles and Constitution, more than twenty years ago. But I cannot allow the Christian world (I mean whatever part of it may learn the circumstances of my life) to suppose that the result of my long acquaintance with the Church of England is approbation of its Constitution. I have seen too clearly the effects of that Constitution in Ireland. It is the near view of the Church in that country, that has given activity to all my other objections. I have seen the unchristian spirit which Articles supported by *law*, as a point of union, produce in a Clergy who, deriving every worldly advantage from legal orthodoxy, and fearing that the least change would weaken the compactness of their ranks, fall into that fierce bigotry which is made up of fanaticism and political party spirit. I have seen, in that Country, how this legal establishment of orthodoxy enables the most designing and irreligious political adventurers, to hamper the exertions of such a man as Whately, by the accusation of heterodoxy. I have witnessed their triumph over him, on the subject of his intended College: I have closely observed his thraldom, and practically learnt the full extent of an evil previously well known to me in theory. No,—I will not die in external connection with a Church, that, for the sake of human articles of Faith, exposes itself to these evils. I will not die in a Church which recognises a Parliamentary law which settles its doctrine and discipline for

ever, and makes the profession of these Articles the only *legal* title to high honours, powers, and emoluments. What error could not be supported by similar means?

You will forgive me, my dear Provost, for what I have said, and for not having more in detail answered your letter. In respect to my connection with your College, I believe it will save both you and me a great deal of pain, if you will take off my name, now that you can do it, not in the way of *censure*, but at my request, and because, independently of other reasons, I am obliged to retrench every unnecessary expense in my present circumstances. I have an indistinct recollection, that my Diploma takes into consideration my being a member of the Church. I will, therefore, as soon as I can get my Books and papers from Ireland, send the Diploma to you, with an *official* letter as to *my Provost*, (that title in relation to you will always be dear to my heart,) requesting you to make whatever use of it you may deem suitable to the circumstances of the case. At all events, it is my determination never in future to add A.M. to my name. Of course you cannot misunderstand my feeling of delicacy upon this point.

Forgive, I beg you again and again, if anything I have said appears presumptuous or harsh; my feelings towards you are those of the purest affection. Even for the Church, which, at a certain stage of my progress from unbelief to Christianity, gave me much assistance, by its too great similarity with that Church in which I was educated—even for the church which I am obliged to leave—I feel gratitude and respect. I only lament that it is in fetters, otherwise it would improve itself by means of the great number of excellent, learned, and pious men which it contains.

Yours ever most sincerely and gratefully,

J. B. W.

To the Rev. George Armstrong.

25, Upper Parliament Street, Liverpool,
February 8th, 1835.

My dear Sir,

I consider myself very fortunate in having urged my request that you would make annotations on my manuscript. Your remarks will, I hope, be of great service to me. I have already corrected the first letter, and availed myself of your suggestions. I am indeed surprised at the number of passages in which I allowed myself to use the established phraseology, against my better judgment. According to Homer, a man loses half of his worth the day he is made a slave. I believe that a Divine loses a larger proportion while, subdued (as in my case) by his affections, he remains under the thraldom, which the insatiable demands of minds unnerved by superstition constantly inflict upon him. I trust I am not under a delusion when I feel, as it were, relieved from a weight that crushed me; and as out of the grasp of an invisible fiend, which, in spite of my love of truth, was perpetually betraying me into acts of deference to the weaknesses of others, which cannot be entirely acquitted of the guilt of dissimulation. But Orthodoxy poisons every man, more or less, (in this country perhaps more than where it is merely a name) from the cradle.

I delivered your message to Mr. and Mrs. Martineau. I had the pleasure to attend Mr. Martineau's chapel last Sunday. I had been there for the first time, the Sunday before last. The simplicity of the service delighted me on both occasions: on the latter however I had the additional pleasure of hearing an admirable discourse from Mr. Martineau. He is a young man of very great talents, and, as far as I can judge, of great worth and sincere piety. What a relief it was to me, to be able to join in social worship, undisturbed by offensive expressions, and without the necessity of mental protests and reservations at every step! The humblest hearer might join "not only with his voice,

but with his understanding," in praising God, and praying for blessings spiritual and temporal. Must not that eternal perversion of language, that repetition of phrases either with an absurd and revolting meaning, or with no meaning at all, which the Orthodox worship has so firmly established and so widely extended, injure the mental faculties, of the lower classes especially? I wish that candid and honest Churchmen would take the trouble of approaching a little nearer, to ascertain, by themselves, what Unitarian Worship really is. But they content themselves with the pictures which their own imaginations contrive, out of the vague reports they receive from bigots who perhaps are as unacquainted with Unitarians as themselves.

I beg you will not trouble yourself about the 5th Letter. I am sure it could do no good.

If the Drogheda packet may be trusted (which there is no reason to doubt) I will send you whatever I may be able to write, in addition to what you have seen. But as I am obliged to draw up new copies as I correct, it will take me a long time to prepare the work for the Press.

My health, though very weak, is not worse than in Ireland. I am trying to get into a house by myself, and, of course, am exposed to a great deal of trouble.

Believe me, with gratitude and esteem,
My dear Sir, yours faithfully,
J. Blanco White.

Liverpool, February 18th, 1835.

Mr. S——, of St. John's College, Oxford, came to me this afternoon, with an intention of making an impression of *awe* upon my mind. As I really respect him, I checked the temptation which now and then I had to joke upon the closing of his eyes, the sepulchral tone of voice which he assumed, and the other external symptoms of downright weak en-

thusiasm which he exhibited. He was evidently puzzled when I, partly but very slightly assuming his tone, said,—'Your situation is awful, Mr. S——! You make *additions* to the word of God! You employ your reason in creating theories which you substitute for the plain declarations of the Gospel, and thus deter men from embracing the Christian religion. Now,' I added, 'suppose I assumed this tone over you, what would you say?' 'That you were wrong.' 'Then I must infer that you are not wrong, because it is *you* that assume a similar authority over me.' It would be useless and tiresome to record the conversation. Mr. S. is a complete specimen of the straightforward orthodox believer. He acknowledges the safety of believing as much as possible. I wonder, for safety's sake, he does not believe in Transubstantiation and Purgatory. He told me there was, now, as great a separation between us, as between himself and a Mahometan. He was indeed altogether as melancholy an exhibition to me as I was to him—though in very different ways.—He frequently repeated—'If you would deliver yourself up *simply* to the Scriptures,' &c. 'So I have (answered I) to the best of my power; but by *simply*, you mean according to your own sense.' Certainly. 'That is, if I deliver myself up to you, we shall agree!'

But it is curious to observe the meaning of *simply* according to these men. To find the doctrines of the Athanasian Creed in the New Testament,—a

double nature in one person,—one person with two intelligent minds,—a God that dies, &c., &c., is to understand the Scriptures *simply*!

March 1, 1835.

I have attended the Commemoration of the Lord's Supper at the Unitarian Chapel, and feel very much gratified. It is a rational and sublime ceremony. Its perfect simplicity is preserved, and every particle of the enthusiastic excitement and charm-like mysteriousness, which the Church of England still encourages, is removed. I am more and more convinced that *nervous* excitement is pernicious, in connection with religion. I am very susceptible of that excitement, and consider myself, by that very circumstance, entitled to judge. A cold-hearted man might be suspected of partiality to what agrees with his own temperament. But this is not my case. I am convinced that in all things *Reason* alone should guide us. Let *light* be sought in Revelation: but Revelation itself is addressed to our rational powers. Our *divine* Oracle is the spirit of God, and his voice is heard only within the Conscience. How are we to distinguish the voice of God, from that of Enthusiasm? By consulting our Reason, and distrusting all excitement, and all selfishness, in connection with the voice of the Oracle.—The Christian should not apply for answers to any wild and infuriated Pythic interpreter of the Oracle. His is a *reasonable* service.

Liverpool, 5, Chesterfield-street,
March 3rd, 1835.

This is the twenty-fifth anniversary of my arrival in England: the first that has found me in a house of my own—solitary—but (as far as my constant bodily suffering and weakness, and a certain degree of nervous anxiety proceeding from that source, permit it) *in peace*. My heart is grateful for the kindness of Providence, during the long period which I have passed in this country. I have been thinking on the great vicissitudes of my life: the sufferings, the troubles, the anxieties which I have gone through. In spite of them all, I am glad that I did not remain in Spain. The idea of the shameful acting which my residence there would have required, is shocking to me, at this moment, in the same degree as when that feeling impelled me to quit my native country. The price which I have paid for the improvement of my mind, is not too great. I have followed TRUTH whithersoever (according to my conscience) it has led me. And now, with the recollection of approaching death always before me, and with a consciousness of my weakness in regard both to Virtue and Truth, my soul has resigned itself into the hands of its Maker—in conformity with the example and instruction of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour. Under the protection of Almighty God, and in full trust in the promises of Christ, I shall wait for my last hour, employing myself, as long as I have any power, in favour of the emancipation of the human mind from the thraldom

of superstition which, under the name of Christianity, oppresses it, and prevents the full accomplishment of Christ's sufferings, by retarding the establishment of true *Gospel Liberty*. I humbly implore God's blessing upon all my friends, both in England and abroad.

Letter to J——.

5, Chesterfield Street, Liverpool,
March 5th, 1835.

I can easily conceive your surprise at finding that I am in this place, and you will be still more surprised when I tell you that I have taken a house, and am living in solitude. The cause of this change is a feeling which *you* certainly will call *honesty*; but to which most people will give the name of *folly* and *absurdity*. The same horror of dissimulation which made me quit Spain five-and-twenty years ago, has obliged me now, in my sixtieth year, to give up my connection with the Church of England. I cannot allow death to overtake me while I believe one thing, and appear to approve the very reverse. My long examination of theological doctrines has ended in my being a Unitarian. It is impossible for me to state the sufferings of my mind, while I resolved upon, and effected, my separation from the Whatelys. But such is the tyranny of ecclesiastical opinion, that even such a liberal man, as the Archbishop of Dublin, could not urge me to stay under his roof, when once I had declared my heterodox opinions.

The kindness of those my friends is unaltered: to the bounty of the Archbishop do I owe the advantage of keeping an excellent valet, whom I was going to discharge before I quitted Dublin, and who, from his good qualities and respectful attention to my comfort, has become almost indispensable to me. I chose Liverpool because it is near to

Dublin, and a short sea-passage is all that I shall have to encounter, if I should be able to visit the Whatelys at Redesdale. Besides, this is not a *clerical* town, where the frowns and the insolent disdain of the Orthodox may (as frequently as it would take place in London) move my indignation, and give me additional pain.

The spirit of intolerance poisons even the best hearts in this country. I know the pain that my presence would give to some excellent friends of mine, and I must keep away. I was in lodgings for a month, but I found them uncomfortable. I have taken a cheap house, which, by means of a very little furniture, I have made habitable; and here I am, wishing for nothing but that I may be allowed to die in *peace;* not in *peace* from theological obloquy, for that I think it my duty to encounter, but free from the necessity of looking for another place of refuge.

March 10, 1835.

A great difference is commonly supposed to exist, in regard to Christ, between the feelings of the *Divinitarian* and those of the Humanitarian. This is a mistake. Every relation that we have to Christ, as a Being *distinct* from God, must regard him as a Man. This applies equally to the Divinitarian, and the Humanitarian. As he is *one* with God, our relations bear upon *one and the same Being*: else there are two Gods.

To the Writer of a Letter signed "C. L."

5, Chesterfield Street, Liverpool,
March 11th, 1835.

Sir,

I do not hesitate to correspond with a stranger who, though he conceals his name, gives unquestionable tokens of

a powerful and well-cultivated mind, as well as of genuine Christian feeling.

Your letter was sent to me from Dublin to this place, where circumstances connected with my theological opinions have induced me to take a house.

The assurance that any of my fellow Christians has received consolation or assistance from what I have written, is most welcome to a mind harrassed with the evils and sufferings, which the honest course I have followed through life cannot but produce to those that firmly adhere to it.

The two passages to which you object, are certainly untenable. I have expressed myself inaccurately in them, and I will take the first opportunity to correct myself. We certainly have no approach whatever to *truth*, except *through* and *in* our minds. The difference of agreement among men arises from the general conformity of the impressions which external objects make upon them. Those natural *symbols* of the ideas they raise seldom fail to work similarly upon different minds. But the objects concerning which Christians have been so long and so fiercely at variance, are *words*—arbitrary symbols of things unknown, in which people are determined to find *objective truth*, entirely different from the ideas which those symbols excite. Accustomed to the uniformity of the impression of the natural symbols, (which we call phenomena,) men expect the same result from the verbal symbols, and suppose that those who disagree as to the impression they make in some individual minds, must be led by a spirit of perverseness, or doomed by God to a *reprobate* state of mind. I do not know a more horrible evil in existence than this delusion. If at the expense of my life I could dispel it, I would (I trust) surrender that life willingly. At all periods of my rational existence, even when *feeling*, rather than conviction, had made me relapse into the theological habits of my youth, I have fearlessly asserted, what I knew by experience, that unbelief is not necessarily the result of depravity, much less can dissent

from certain theological views be referred to *moral* faults. I deeply lament that England—a land I love and admire—my second country, should be the spot in Europe most deeply sunk into that refined intolerance, which attributes opinions to moral depravity. The sincere friends of pure Christianity, the enlightened minds that could assail that intellectual monster with effect, are too timid, too dispersed. The consequence is, that whatever is done (and that is little indeed) to oppose it, comes from the side of total unbelief, from the totally irreligious party. May God open a way for a union between the truly *free-minded* Christians! May all good men who know the evils of orthodox Intolerance combine to meet it in the open field of discussion, independently of *political party spirit*, which is the great obstacle to the true progress of the pure Gospel in this country.

Whoever you are, may God bless you!

J. Blanco White.

March 17, 1835.

I am convinced that my mind continued more or less, till this last period, under a remnant of the servile fear to *some* authority in matters of religion, instilled into it during my youth. I even suspect that at this moment there is a secret feeling of awe—like that of a child who ventures to approach an object which has been long used for the purpose of frightening him,—when certain convictions which have been growing, in spite of myself, compel me at length to question some *privileged* points. I am reading Paulus' *Leben Jesu*, a second time. The portion I was reading, this morning, relates to the Genealogies by Matthew and Luke. Paulus believes in

the miraculous conception. I have always set this question aside; but, nevertheless, the introductory chapters appear to me spurious. Yet as, free from the last restraints of *orthodoxy*, I look into the subject of the miraculous conception, I cannot but perceive the internal inconsistency of that narrative with the *spirit* of the New Testament. Seize the general tendency of the pure Gospel into one concentrated thought, and you will be persuaded that Jesus' words, "the body profiteth nothing," are a master key to the whole of his revelation. But how totally inconsistent with this leading principle is the account of Jesus' conception! The writer of that account must have believed that *the body is of vital importance* in this matter. He must have been under the impression that, unless the vivifying principle which set the rudiments of Christ's body into growth was different from the natural one, he could not be *sufficiently* the Son of God. Ignorant, it should seem, of the doctrine that Christ was one of the persons in the Trinity, the *Son* from eternity, he thought it necessary that he should be the *Son* by a miraculous act of material generation. The whole idea, indeed, is so perfectly the offspring of the notions about *matter* and its impurities, prevalent about the latter end of the first and beginning of the second century, that, in spite of manuscripts and criticism, I cannot doubt that this narrative has the impress of falsehood indelibly set upon it. Yet I felt a kind of *misgiving* when I was about to write a note in pencil in my copy of

Paulus, just hinting at this view. Oh, superstition, how deep have thy roots penetrated into man's soul!

The conception of Christ, in the supposed preternatural manner, would be a *miracle* performed for its own sake, *and useless as a* PROOF *of any one thing.*

Letter to the Rev. ——.

5, Chesterfield Street, Liverpool,
March 18th, 1835.

My dear Friend,

You need not apologise for writing to me on the subjec which presses most heavily upon my mind, and has become a source of mental suffering to the Archbishop. I know your kindness and friendship towards me, and thank you for the information, as well as for the advice you give me. The substance of that advice seems to be, *delay* in my publication. In my own mind, the circumstances which you mention require a speedy removal of the surmises of the Archbishop's enemies; and *that* can be done only by *publishing facts.* The inferences against the Archbishop are grounded upon the fact of my being an Unitarian;—and that is both true and public. Silence would necessarily strengthen the imputation, absurd as it is. The public must know, from me, that I have not consulted the Archbishop, because (among other reasons, with which the public has nothing to do, at least in the *present state* of things,) I do not conceive it advisable to consult persons who, on the point in question, are completely at variance with the views of him who consults. If I had wanted advice,—such advice as is generally asked when a person wants to be supported in a certain direction—for instance, for the purpose of remaining in the Church—I would have applied to some one whom I conceived to entertain similar opinions to my own, and who, being a good man, continued nevertheless in the Church. That, though I heartily wished to be able

conscientiously to spare myself all that I am suffering, I did not go to the Archbishop, proves both that my conviction is strong, and that I do not consider him in the state which I have just described in regard to the *Divinity, and especially the worship of Christ.* Upon those points I consider him immoveably settled. But our present concern is with the unfavourable reports afloat. I lament their existence from my heart; but I could not prevent them. Whatever men think of me, I must obey my conscience. Whether my views are recent or not, whether I have acted rashly or not, is between God and myself. If I cannot avoid blame in the execution of my duty, I must submit to it. But I have the most unquestionable proofs that, if I deserve any blame, it is on the score of delay. Perhaps I ought to have declared myself an Unitarian long since. I received the Sacrament, at St. Anne's, not long before I left Dublin, and I would receive it again, there or any where, if I had no better opportunity of performing that solemn remembrance of my Saviour. The Popish notion, which requires conformity on every tenet of those who administer the Sacrament, on the part of every communicant, is groundless. If the Church of England had no Articles, or if the members of the Church were allowed to publish freely their objections to those Articles, without thereby incurring excommunication, (as it happens in Germany,) I should not have thought it necessary to separate myself from it. But the very stir, and the persecuting feeling which any separation occasions, makes it incumbent on every honest man who has cause for separation, to make the lurking spirit of bigotry manifest at his own risk. The ditch must be filled, and I, for one, am ready to fall into it for that purpose. The citadel of intolerance must be taken.

Consider, my dear Sir, my situation, and ask yourself, in my place, what I could do, except what I have done. God alone knows the pain with which I separated myself from the Archbishop and his family. I thought that when I had

made that most painful sacrifice, I had met every claim of friendship in regard to that excellent man. But, because his enemies are maliciously absurd, it is now supposed I must drag a chain on my mind, the links of which can never be sundered. What must be done to restore myself to mental liberty, which, without liberty of expression and action, is a mockery? Must I discuss the whole Unitarian question, as well as the question of Establishments, with the Archbishop? But could we deny, if that were done, at present, that it was done with the object to stop the mouths of the Archbishop's enemies? And would it prove that *he* did not hold secretly my opinions? If he were as dishonest as his enemies calumniously suppose him, does he want ingenuity to maintain any point against me? The more I consider this painful subject (and it haunts me day and night), the more convinced I am that I cannot, must not, alter my course. A breach between the Archbishop and myself would be worse than death to me. But unless he can see my circumstances in somewhat like the light in which I see them, I must submit to the worst. What a thing this kind of Orthodox good fame must be, when a breath may tarnish it like the honour of a maiden! I believe that if I were in the place of the Archbishop, I should content myself with my own consciousness of rectitude, and expose myself to such ungrounded rumours for the sake of a friend, who, old, weak, and in constant suffering, cannot bear an additional weight besides that which almost crushes him. What else did he do when the Bishop of Exeter, almost by name, charged him in Parliament with Socinianism? Whatever may be done, on my part, to save him from those imputations, I will do most readily, but no degree of even temporary secrecy, or concealment, as to my change, must be expected from me. I am not to change my mental and moral character at the age of sixty. I have a duty to perform, and I trust in God I should find strength if the gallows or the stake awaited me. Consider again, I

finally request, that the reports against the Archbishop cannot be checked by either delay of publication, or any thing but positive and public assertions, which may be, and, if necessary, shall be, proved by unquestionable documents. The fact of my being an Unitarian, is undeniable; and, far from concealing it, I wish it to be known. It is, indeed, so known already, as that no conceivable power could suppress it.

Believe me, &c.

J. B. W.

To Miss L——.

5, Chesterfield-street, Liverpool,
March 20th, 1835.

Dear Madam,

A suspicion crossed my mind, when I read your anonymous letter, that my unknown correspondent might be a Lady; but the tone of reasoning (I mean no offence to the sex), showed a mind so uncommonly exercised on subjects which ladies neglect, that I rejected the notion. I am exceedingly glad to find that I preserve some quickness of perception at the age of sixty, for that peculiar delicacy which was on the point of betraying you under your assumed *incog.*

It was for the purpose of declaring myself a *Unitarian* that I tore myself from friends whom I love as much as those whom I left in Spain. This is a remarkable instance of the poisonous nature of that Orthodoxy which is supported by *Church Establishments.* Doctrines being made the bond of union of a powerful body of men, whose only legal title to the enjoyment of wealth, honour, and influence, is adherence to those doctrines, there must of necessity exist a bitter jealousy against every man who shakes the blind confidence of the multitude, in the supposed sacredness of

those doctrines. My friend, the Archbishop of Dublin, who is like a brother to me, is *not* a Unitarian. I know the character of his mind, and from that knowledge I may add, he *will never be a Unitarian*: not from want of candour, not from want of mental liberality, but from a peculiar *concentrativeness* (if I may use the language of the phrenologists) which fixes him immoveably to the views which, with admirable talent and industry, he worked out for himself in his youth. Nevertheless, the consciousness of dishonesty in the profession of the *articled* points of belief, (I use, on purpose, a word which may remind you of an *Indenture*,) that consciousness, which exists in multitudes of men bound by the articles, will not allow any man of a certain freedom of mind to be believed on his word, when he asserts that he stops short of certain conclusions: and this is the case, in regard to my dear friend. To prevent, as much as in me lies, the increase of the obloquy with which he is daily assailed, I sacrificed every advantage which I was enjoying in his house. The sacrifice, I can assure you, was greater than that which I made to the love of truth when I left Spain. I had the adventurous spirit of youth to support me on that occasion: now I am old, and enfeebled by a disease which has made my life a continuation of suffering for the last twenty years. But it seems my self-devotion is useless. The fact of my having become a Unitarian, which (as if I had committed forgery, or ran away with another man's property) begins to be whispered about, is seized upon by the Archbishop's enemies, as a proof that he holds the same opinions. Such is the absurdity of *priestly* malignity: priests are the same everywhere, and under every denomination. I speak of the body of Priests. There are numerous individual exceptions. My intention has been, since I took up the resolution of leaving the Church, to *proclaim the fact*. I am not to change the temper of my mind on the brink of the grave. A work of mine will appear, I hope, in the course of the summer, proving that the notions

of Heresy and Orthodoxy have no foundation in Scripture, and that Salvation does not depend on opinions.

I had arrived at the conclusions which I now maintain, so early as the year 1818. *Feeling*, (that treacherous influence in these matters,) feeling alone, drove me back into the Orthodox FLOCK (a most appropriate name). Perhaps this was providentially effected; for my declaration will now have more weight, than at that time.

I have gone through the state of surrender to the Necessitarian theory. But though, in reasoning, it is impossible to upset that theory, I conceive it useless in practice. I believe its influence upon some characters may be mischievous. The best practical shape it can assume is that which the New Testament gives it—*Faith*, i. e. *trust* in God, into whose *being* and *power* everything must be ultimately resolved.

Though I write under great bodily, and, consequently, mental exhaustion, I shall be happy to correspond with you.

With sincere respect, I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

J. BLANCO WHITE.

Liverpool, March 22, 1835.

I have heard a gentleman, whose name I know not, officiate at Paradise Street Chapel. That I should be delighted with the Unitarian service, when such men as —— and —— were the ministers, might be attributed to the extraordinary talents of those two men; but the minister whom I heard this morning is a man only of respectable talents. His good sense, however, the truly practical nature of his discourse, the applicability of every thing he said to the life of a Christian, and the knowledge of the science of morals, as con-

nected with the Gospel, which he showed, though not attempting to make any scientific display, convinced me that even moderate abilities go a greater way among Unitarians than among Churchmen. Fifty of the sermons I have heard from Clergymen of the Establishment would scarcely amount in useful substance to this Unitarian's discourse. Such, certainly, should be the result, according to theory; such I indeed find it in practice. The mind of the Churchman is brought up, pressed on every side by a thorny hedge of fixed doctrines, which defy the first principles of reason. It must, therefore, at the best, grow contracted; in most cases its growth will be stopt. What you hear from such preachers are only set phrases; hardly does one ever find any thing which has really grown out of the mind itself. And then you cannot but observe that even a most powerful mind, such as that of Whately, is employing its whole strength in trying to move with the appearance of freedom, in the manner of a dancer on the tight-rope. He certainly moves gracefully along the narrow path; but you see that he is conscious that he may, at any moment, break his neck on either side of the *articled* rope.

Liverpool, March 23rd, 1835.

I have this morning received a most melancholy letter from my excellent friend Newman, of Oriel. The letter is nothing but a groan, a sigh, from beginning to end. I have answered as follows:—

My dear Newman,

I cannot express to you how strongly, and deeply, my heart responds to your affection. I will not trouble you with controversy; but I cannot leave your letter unanswered, lest you should imagine that I could receive it with any other feelings than those of affection and gratitude. The state of your mind is quite different from that of my own. We agree in moral tendencies, (including, I hope in regard to myself, religion,) but our understandings have taken opposite courses in the pursuit of divine truth. I have done every thing in my power to avoid error. At three different periods have I (but in vain) practised the course which you recommend. My journals, kept for many years, attest my struggles. But I must follow the light that is in me. If that light be darkness, it is so without my being aware of it: without the slightest ground for suspecting that it is wilfully so. I cannot follow any other man's light. I cannot cast my own responsibility upon another. I would give anything to have it in my power to relieve the pain you suffer on my account. But as long as the notion that opinions can decide the fate of immortal souls shall exist, the most excruciating sufferings await the best minds. If I have any strength left, I will employ it in combating that error. My mind is decided. I am liable to error. I know it too well. I humble myself before my God, as I know him through Christ. My life, my being, is devoted to Him, through him who loved me and gave himself for me. I trust in divine mercy, that in spite of the agonies which the existing errors produce to men who might otherwise live together in the Unity of the spirit of Christ, we shall be united, out of the reach of doubt and dissension, in a better world than this.

May God pour his best blessings upon you. My humble prayers shall always be offered up for you.

Ever yours, truly and affectionately,

J. B. W.

Liverpool, March 26th, 1835.

The Rev. James Yates, of London, in a letter dated 21st inst., did me the honour of offering to propose me as Keeper of Dr. Williams's Library, Red-Cross Street. Yesterday, (the 25th,) after having considered the offer, and encouraged by the approbation of my friend the Archbishop of Dublin, I expressed my consent in a letter which was forwarded by the Post. The election is to take place on the 1st April next. But in the evening, in consequence of a conversation with Mr. Studley Martin, I recollected the mention of Dr. Willams's Trust in one of the Pamphlets relating to the case of Lady Hewley's Charity, which Mr. Yates had sent me. After examining the passage I was fully convinced that I ought not to accept the appointment. I had a sleepless night, in consequence of this untoward event. I do not regret the place itself, but the having to withdraw my consent. In my miserable state of health, and after all I have suffered in my mind since the beginning of the year, anything agitates me. The following is a copy of the letter I send by this day's Post to Mr. Yates:—

My dear Sir,

Not long after my letter of yesterday had been sent to the Post, a conversation which I had with a friend, brought to my recollection, that I had seen Dr. Williams's trust coupled with that of Lady Hewley as an object of the same hostility. Alarmed by this circumstance, I examined the pamphlets which you had been so good as to send me, and

to my great grief, I found that my revived recollection was correct. In your Appendix I find that the Treasurer and principal patron of Highbury College, were with some reason supposed to be taking measures to remove the whole of the Trustees. I have no doubt that, since you have been so kind as to make me the offer of proposing me as Librarian under that Trust, you must have, at least, a high probability that the intentions of those bigotted enemies of every thing liberal are not likely to be put into execution. But I cannot accept your very honourable and kind offer, under the apprehensions which the fact of the existing hostility has raised in my mind. It was with great difficulty that I brought myself to overlook the pain, which I was sure to receive from being in the neighbourhood of numerous acquaintances, in London, who would take every opportunity of manifesting their resentment and mortification at my having left the Church. But I cannot endure the idea of having, besides, to bear a worse kind of persecution, from a part of the Dissenters themselves.

The place which you so liberally proposed to me, must be in itself an object of desire to many, who will disguise to themselves that desire under the shape and form of zeal for Gospel truth. Every circumstance in my case would enable them to vent their virulence against me, with much more effect than against any other person; for a foreigner, in England, is never popular. It would be said that no sooner had I expressed my dissent from the church, than I stept into the best situation which the Dissenters have to give. My conduct in regard to preferment in the Church, during more than twenty years, would be forgotten, and both Churchmen, and the fanatical among Dissenters, would join in trying (not without some chance of success) to represent all my past sacrifices as of no value. I beg therefore, most earnestly, that you will give me leave to withdraw the consent which I gave yesterday. I am quite certain that, in my present state of health, the removal to Lon-

don would not be free from danger. But if instead of the peace (partial as it is) which I enjoy here, I should *even apprehend* that I was an object of personal envy and jealousy, by being placed at the head of the Library, I should inevitably sink under such a combination of evils. I must *positively* decline the otherwise very attractive offer which I owe to your goodness, and for which you shall always have my best thanks and gratitude.

Believe me, &c.,

J. B. W.

Liverpool, April 11th, 1835.

I wish to record the continuance, or rather the increase, of my delight in the Unitarian Service. For a long time did I avoid going to Church, except to the Lord's Supper, because the service had grown intolerable to me. I now rejoice at the approach of Sunday. This very morning while at Chapel, I had the strongest and deepest conviction that I had never witnessed anything so really sublime as the whole worship in which I was joining. I can also attest the admirable behaviour of the Congregation. There is a marked attention on all sides. In a word, the whole service is a *reality*. I heartily thank God for having been made acquainted with the Unitarian Worship. I have seen nothing superior, nor even equal to it.

To John Stuart Mill, Esq.

Liverpool, April 20th, 1835.

My dear Sir,

*——— I consider the present school of Literature in France as one of the most flourishing in Europe. How

infinitely superior it is to that which existed before the Revolution! I believe my circumstances entitle me to judge impartially on that point. Before I left Spain I read almost exclusively French books. Rousseau, perhaps, all in all, the best writer among the French, was to such a degree my favourite that I left not a page unread in the Geneva edition of his works. I gave up French for English reading when I came to this country, till about five years ago, when I returned to *mes premiers amours*. But while I had grown old, they on the contrary had begun a new and vigorous life, infinitely superior to that in which I had known them.

I have nearly finished the last Number of the Westminster. It is written with honest indignation: but it is all (if I may say so) too rough and angular. Have you read Victor Cousin's Lectures on the History of Philosophy, and his Fragmens Philosophiques? He would say that the Westminster is the incarnation of *École Materialiste*. An infusion of *Idealism* would do it good.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Ever yours faithfully,

J. Blanco White.

To the Rev. George Armstrong.

5, Chesterfield Street, Liverpool,
May 16, 1835.

My dear Sir,

I have been thinking of writing to you, but being very ill, and having more to do than I could well perform, even if I were better, I have delayed it. The arrival, however, of your kind letter has decided me not to prolong my silence. It is true that Mr. James Yates, of London, did me the favour to offer proposing me to Dr. Williams's Trustees as Librarian. Amidst much doubt I accepted the proposal, in the hope of being useful. But at the close of the very day when I had sent the accepting letter, I found in

one of the pamphlets published concerning Lady Hewley's Charity, that the other branches of Dissenters were about to bring a similar action against Dr. Williams's Trustees. To be thus placed within the reach of the most desperate bigotry, to be placed between two fires—from the side of the Church, and also from that of Dissent—was an idea which completely unnerved me. All my former objections —those which I had put aside in the hope of being useful in London—revived; and I wrote immediately to request from Mr. Yates that he would allow me to withdraw my consent. I have not heard one word more about the business; but I consider my escape from the bigots of Methodism, &c. as a very fortunate one. I have been told that there has been a formal separation between the ORTHODOX (!) Dissenters and the Unitarians: and that the former are determined to dispute, at law, every actual possession in the hands of the latter. Dr. Channing is perfectly right. There are scarcely a few sparks of any thing like light in England, upon religious points. The mass of ignorance and bigotry which is here reckoned pure religion is immense.

Mr. James Yates has procured the acceptance of a London publisher for my Letters. Reduced to constant suffering of mind and body, helpless, and with only a few distant well-wishers—such, I mean, as could help me concerning such a publication—I must allow things to take their course.

I examined the *Revised Liturgy* several years ago. As far as I am acquainted with Unitarian worship, I prefer the voluntary prayers. The eternal repetition of an established Liturgy is to me intolerable. I continue to admire the form of worship in which I have hitherto joined. I am delighted with the discourses of Mr. —— and Mr. ——. My respect for both increases.

As soon as I can get a copy of my work, it shall go directly to you. I expect the proof of the first sheet every day; but I expect it in great fear of the difficulty I shall have in correcting the press. Mr. Thom, however, has

kindly offered to assist me. But it is impossible to describe my present unfitness for any thing that requires care and attention. God, who knows what is best for me, will, I trust, support me.

With sincere respect and gratitude, I am,
My dear Sir,
Yours ever faithfully,
J. Blanco White.

Liverpool, May 17th, 1835.

Sunday after Sunday, going alternately to the two Unitarian Chapels in this town, I enjoy the most sublime moral and intellectual treat which the purified religious principle can offer to man. I, for one, had never conceived any thing like what I now experience in connection with that principle. I was, indeed, acquainted with a religious excitement, very like intoxication; an excitement which, similar to that produced by stimulants, brings with it a deep-seated consciousness that it cannot last—that it will gradually disappear, leaving us exhausted and low. What I now experience has all the characters of reality. I do not find myself, as before, anxious and restless to keep up a state which brings not the confidence of sober conviction with it. I used to feel, as every one must now and then in certain dreams, that, much as I was moved at the moment, there must be delusion at the bottom. Now, I do not perceive even an approach of that misgiving. I draw near to the presence of the living God, and I know that the nearness is not visionary; I am convinced

that it is real, and that it takes place in the only sanctuary which exists among men—in the temple of the Holy Spirit, our MIND—our Reasonable Mind—the seat of the Divine Oracle for men. I listen to Hymns full of instruction, conveyed in sentiment, supported by the sublimest of all sensations—that of the Musical ear. I hear Discourses which instruct me, and delight me. And (how strange will what I am about to say sound in the ears of the *established* piety!) my Faith in God, by means of Christ, increases. If by Faith is understood an assent to what is *incredible*, I certainly have not such Faith. My Faith increases, aided by an undisturbed development of the reasonableness of the great Truths of Religion, namely, the paternal character of God, by none so clearly exhibited to mankind as by our greatest benefactor under God—Jesus of Nazareth; the call to immortality; the readiness of God to forgive on repentance; the certainty of that forgiveness without either payment, or a strict claim on our part; the reasonableness of submitting to what is evil *to us*, committing the final result to our heavenly Father, as Christ trusted him during his life, and especially when to Him he commended his spirit on the Cross. My faith in all this grows—not by that desperate blind effort which I used to make when I wished to assent to the doctrines of the Trinity, Atonement, &c. &c., and yet to preserve my sincerity—but it grows without effort, and just as I believe in any other truth of reality, by a conviction with which the

Will has nothing to do, except obeying it in proportion as it takes possession of the mind. I indeed thank my God for this Faith; I pray for its increase, but I do not attempt to *make* it for myself. An artificial Faith applies to all religions equally, and perhaps most to those which are most absurd; for if the mind surrenders to an *artificial* belief, the result will be complete, in proportion as the *will* excludes every ray of light from the system so wilfully embraced. That Faith is easier, and more powerful in complete Popery, than in mixed Protestantism. I thank God, I feel at length perfectly free from it.

To John S. Mill, Esq.

Liverpool, May 28, 1835.

My dear Sir,

You must have observed that very young children run because they cannot walk. The same thing happens not unfrequently to me in regard to my mental exertions. I have nearly finished my Article on Crabbe. *—— It has, however, been written quite against the grain, and I fear it may not be fit to be inserted. This is not affectation, as you will find if it should happen that any thing I send should be rejected. I should, of course, be sorry to fail of the object of my efforts; but I should be infinitely more sorry if, out of regard for me, any thing unworthy of the Review [the London], and of a man of letters, should be given to the public. Being weak and nervous, no sooner have I finished any thing than I take a dislike to it, losing all power of judging *myself*. I fear my Article, if published, will raise an outcry among the *tail* of the Quarterly. But I have most earnestly wished to be just. *——

I am glad to find that you think the next Number will improve in tone and matter. It is of the greatest consequence that the *Reformers* should act with the greatest caution, and check whatever is mere feeling. The task is difficult, and a great responsibility to mankind lies upon them. I believe most firmly that you yourself are honest and disinterested, and take it for granted that you have chosen associates of the same worth. Upon that ground alone it is that I wish to assist you in keeping up the Review. My anxiety, however, as to the management of that work is in proportion to the importance and delicacy of the cause which it has undertaken to promote.

Believe me, with sincere esteem,

My dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

J. Blanco White.

Letter to Lord Holland.

5, Chesterfield Street, Liverpool,
May 31st, 1835.

My dear Lord Holland,

I ought to have written to you long since, to acquaint you with my change of residence; but I have had so much to write, and so much trouble besides, that I have been obliged to defer it.

The state of my mind respecting the Church, a nearer insight into that system which I had in Ireland, and my long-established determination not to dissemble on religious points, urged me last winter to tear myself from the family of my friends, and retire to this place by myself. Notwithstanding the separation which my being a decided Unitarian had made imperative upon me, in order to use my freedom, and leave my friend, the Archbishop, undisturbed as much as in me lay, by suspicions against his orthodoxy, I wished not to be far from him. This, and the circumstance that this is

not a *clerical* town, induced me to fix myself here. I have taken a cheap house, and I hope to die quietly in my retreat, where my last prayer shall be, that God may soon relieve the world from established priesthoods of all kinds. I have known them under various modifications, and am convinced that they are a great drawback on the happiness and progress of mankind.

I fear very much for poor Spain. My brother's hopes have revived with your return into office, but I feel both indignant and despondent when I consider the almost incurable mischief which Lord Elliot's mission has done. That indirect recognition of Don Carlos's right to the crown, has encouraged all the enemies of liberty and improvement in Spain. I am so convinced that, according to the constitutional laws of Spain, and even according to the principle, right or wrong, on which the monarchy has been governed since the accession of the Bourbons, Don Carlos has no right to the crown, that, were I in Spain, I would at all risks oppose him, independently of his Conservative and bigoted sentiments. In my opinion, England is bound in honour to rescue a suffering country which, if we are to judge by her policy, (as posterity certainly will,) she helped against the French, only to deliver her, tied hand and foot, into the power of an abominable despotism. Spain would have improved under Joseph Buonaparte, but she is sure to sink more and more under the pressure of the incurable and odious Bourbons.

I do not improve in health, though in spite of suffering I work incessantly. I have found an institution in this place —the *Athenæum*—which owes its existence chiefly to Roscoe, where there is a very select library. There I usually pass my mornings. It is an exceedingly well-arranged establishment altogether.

I hope you are quite well; and shall be delighted to hear a good account of Lady Holland. I have followed Lord John Russell through all his troubles during the election

with anxious interest. Deseo a Vstedes todos, *acierto*, con todo mi corazon.

Believe me, with affectionate and unchangeable esteem,
My dear Lord Holland,
Yours ever,
J. Blanco White.

P.S. My kind remembrances to Allen.

Letter from Lord Holland.

South Street, June 10th, 1835.

My dear Blanco,

I am really ashamed of having left your kind letter so long unanswered, and hope you will attribute my silence, in spite of truth, to excessive ministerial fatigue and what not, or to any thing, save and except an indifference to your welfare, or to any kind expression of your friendship and confidence in me.

I am not at all surprised that an earnest and sincere investigation into the contents of the book which Christians deem inspired, should have led you to a conviction that the religion revealed therein was not intended to convey a proposition so revolting to one's understanding, and such a solecism in language, as that one is three and three are one. I do not pretend to be as earnest as you in my search, and still less to be as capable of forming a critical judgment of the Gospels, which I have never studied with much attention, and which are in a language with which I am imperfectly acquainted; but I have always thought, from my cursory view of the controversy, that it was nearly as preposterous to suppose that the Evangelists intended to convey the Athanasian interpretation of what they heard or recorded, as to believe, on the authority of the unknown person who composed the Creed so fraudulently termed Athanasian, that three were one, and one three. There are perhaps more passages which favour the notion of the pre-

existence and divinity of Jesus Christ, but they are all, I suspect, with due allowance for Oriental expression, susceptible of another interpretation, and I have little doubt that an unbiassed critic (if in such matters there were such a phenomenon to be found) would pronounce the Unitarian system more reconcileable with the language, as well as more consonant with reason, than any that has been built upon the philosophy of these books. It is yet clearer, that it is in its consequences less liable to abuse, less productive of fanaticism and superstition, and more conducive to the morality of mankind and the well-being of society, than any other. As a politician, I should not hesitate to prefer it to any shape that Judaism, Paganism, Hindooism, Mahometanism, or Christianity has hitherto assumed. So you see we meet very nearly.

I think you are unjust in your strictures on Lord Elliot's mission. It was certainly conceived with the intention of serving, not injuring, the cause of Spain, and when the endeavours of Wellington to prevail on Carlos to abandon his mad and wicked projects come to be known, it will perhaps be found much less injurious in its effects, than you suppose.

I think your residence at Liverpool is well chosen. Lady Holland is very, very far from well, but desires her love. Many thanks for your good wishes—we shall do what we can to deserve them.

Yours truly,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

5, Chesterfield Street, Liverpool,
Sunday, June 7th, 1835.

Increase of illness, produced by discomfort, having kept me at home, I answered a letter on the subject of Truth—objective and subjective truth. But I fear, though the letter may contain some good observations, the answer was not clear. It has since oc-

curred to me that the best answer to the question, What is Truth? would be, that which Reason tells us to have been proved to exist, or to have existed. As our Reason must be a beam of the eternal Reason, by which all things were created, the only approach we can make to objective truth, the work of the infinite Reason, is through its emanation, our finite Reason. The proper use of our Reason is however subject to conditions. These we must study and follow, if we are to avoid delusions. By these means our Reason improves and corrects itself. By careful attention to such rules, a wonderful progress has been made in the knowledge of external nature—an objective knowledge of Truth, which in a multitude of cases admits of no doubt. In the same manner, though with greater difficulty and danger of error, we may advance in the important knowledge of our minds—or psychology. This view of Truth has the advantage of being practical. If any one, for instance, asks me, "What do you mean by a lover of Truth? Every man is a passionate lover of his own Truth:" I shall answer: "By a lover of Truth I mean a lover of *Reason*. Reason does not belong to one man, more than to another. The true lover of Truth, i. e. of Reason, abides by what appears reasonable to him, not because it is his own reason approves it, but because he does not see any other view more in conformity with that Reason which judges of all things. He is ready to examine, at all times; he does not stop in his inquiries till Reason, independently of every other con-

sideration, is satisfied. The man who, in everything, looks to that satisfaction of Reason, above all other satisfactions of self whatever—that man is a lover of Truth."

Question to be answered.

Where shall we stop?

Answer.—Where the reason for which we began to move, may happen to cease.

Letter to Miss L——.

5, Chesterfield-street, Liverpool,
June 7th, 1835.

My dear Miss L——,

Your letter has found me in a wretched state of health: but what can I do better than to answer it? If the definition of Truth, on which you consult me, is one you have drawn from anything I have said, I must have expressed myself, not only obscurely, but entirely against what I wished to convey to others. There are so many, and so great truths on which mankind are agreed—evidently from the independence of those truths on anything merely subjective—that the most extravagant scepticism can hardly venture on the denial of Truth independent of human conviction. The very *denial* of the universal sceptic involves the assertion of his own existence—of the existence of something that denies. But when we speak of truth, in connection with moral duty, we almost necessarily limit all we say to contested points, on which the conviction of different persons is different. All, however, suppose,—the bigots of all kinds positively assert—that their own view coincides with what exists independently of their minds. Now, what do most people contend for in such cases? That their individual view of the truth—their *subjective* truth—shall be received by all as the *objective* truth itself. The practical

question which is to be settled is this: to which Truth are our moral duties of obedience, &c., due? Is it not to *conviction*—to our own deliberate and impartially-formed *conviction*? Or is it to the *conviction* of others? For what truth did Judge Hales "forsake all," &c., &c.? Unquestionably for the eternal, self-existent truth. But where did he find it, or thought he found it? Was it not in his own conviction? He might indeed be in error; but he had done his duty. Observe, after all, that the harrassing struggles which we have to endure arise chiefly about *truths* of a historical and *critical* nature; where the only objective existence has passed away, at least from among us, with the existence of the witnesses and writers, about whose accuracy of observation, and whose meaning of certain expressions, we set the world on flames. It is chiefly in regard to these points, that we should endeavour to make people understand that to speak of Truth as an external existence, is absurd. The facts in question either existed or not. But of that transient existence God alone has a true knowledge. We possess only human evidence; we weigh that evidence, and the *conviction* or *non-conviction* it produces on each individual is, in *regard to such points*, the only truth with which we are concerned. To express and obey (if practical) that *conviction*, is the duty of every individual; but he must also recollect that *all others* have a similar duty to perform. Respect for *conviction* must be reciprocal. This is the only true foundation of charity and liberality on these unhappy points of contention. I doubt whether even now I have conveyed my meaning to you. Remember, however, the difference between Truth (abstract, independent truth) and *Veracity*; and much of the obscurity of the question will disappear. I should recommend to you (if you have not anticipated my recommendation) a regular study of the philosophy of the human mind. The Scotch writers, Reid and Dugald Stewart, are very judicious guides; but if, after reading *the latter*, especially, you were to study

the works of Victor Cousin, particularly his *Fragmens de Philosophie* (the earliest volume, not the *Nouveaux Fragmens*, though they are also good), comparing the whole with the *existences* in your own consciousness, you would lay a foundation for all your other studies, which unfortunately is seldom attended to in England. Lord Brougham's work on Paley would not abound in mistakes, if he had attended more to this sort of study.

My little work will probably be out in a fortnight. I will take care to send you a copy the moment I receive a supply from London.

Believe me, with sincere respect and esteem,

Yours faithfully,

J. Blanco White.

To J. S. Mill, Esq.

5, Chesterfield Street,
June 10th, 1835.

My dear Sir,

The note which I have received from you this morning has given me particular pleasure. Such has been of late the dejection of spirits under which I have laboured, that I really opened your letter, prepared to submit to the rejection of the Article. This state of suffering is the result of a disorder in the digestive organs which I have had for years, and of many mental struggles and anxieties, which are the bitter fruits of my early slavery, under a gross and mischievous system of superstition. Frequently drawn out of my *rational* course by undercurrents of deeply-imbibed sentiments, the perception of those partial errors has, more than once, obliged me to rectify them at the cost of great pain and misery. But though old, infirm, and without any one of the supports which men usually find in domestic society,—I thank God I am immoveable in my determina-

tion to sacrifice everything to the cause of Reason and Freedom.—But I fear I am falling into *Rant*.

Your two corrections are most judicious, and I thank you for them. I am aware that I frequently fail in weighing my expressions of reprobation in regard to certain moral faults; though at the time I use them, I have not the remotest wish to make the reprobation fall upon the individual whom I find only partially guilty. Never scruple to tell me of my faults. I will do the same friendly service respecting the Review: only that in many cases it would require a long conversation to convey my meaning.

What do you intend to do with Lord Brougham? I have been sadly disappointed by his Discourse on Paley—so much so, that I almost fear I may be under some delusion. To find such a collection of crudities coming from a man of his talents and reading, is quite startling. And yet I am more on the side of the psychological views he takes, than against them: but his arguments—for instance, for the spirituality of the soul—are so unphilosophical; his *dogmatism* upon this kind of subjects is so *theological*, that I read the whole book under a strong feeling of impatience. The only view I like is that on Synthesis and Analysis—but the view is there, nobody can tell why. It appears to me that Lord Brougham has treated most branches of physical and metaphysical science, as *briefs* put into his hands, upon which he must say something plausible—just enough for the satisfaction of people not much above the juries he has addressed in the course of his life.

It appears to me that I shall not be able to give a *general* interest to my *abstract* of Guizot's Lectures, unless you give me leave to write a very long Article. The French Reviews frequently divide such Articles. Would you allow me to do the same? Pray consider the subject at your leisure, and let me know your determination about it. There is an enormous mass of things to be examined—or rather to be methodically stated—if the general readers are to be allured

into reading an article on History. I proposed Guizot because I have attentively studied the work; but I am not so partial to that subject as to insist upon it, if you wished for anything else within my reach.

I continue under my usual sufferings. Many thanks for the interest you take about my health.

Yours ever sincerely,
J. Blanco White.

Letter to Miss L——.

5, Chesterfield-street, Liverpool,
June 11th, 1835.

My dear Miss L——,

Many thanks for the answer to Mr. Bagot. He seems to be a bigot (the change of one letter tells the truth in the case) of the darkest hue. I am convinced that both in the Unitarian and the Roman Catholic question, the ground of defence should be made broader than it is. You will see my meaning practically exhibited in the forthcoming Letters on *Heresy and Orthodoxy*. If I had a little more bodily strength, I would endeavour to open the eyes of Unitarians to the necessity of forming, and *avowing*, definite notions of the authority of the Bible. Like the old authority of the Church, which acted more like a superstitious feeling than a definite principle, the *oracular* character given indiscriminately to every part of the Bible, places intolerance, bigotry, and superstition on vantage ground. The Bible is revered, not as a rational, intellectual help to Christianity, but as an *Idol*. I remember to have heard Coleridge, the Poet, say, —though probably he would not say it publicly—that one of the evils of England was her *Bibliolatry*. But like all popular idols, the approach to it is dangerous to all but those who creep on their hands and knees.

I perceive the stage at which you find yourself in the Philosophy of the Human Mind. What you call instincts,

should be termed facts of observation. The second volume of Cousin's *Histoire de la Philosophie* would give you much light. It is an admirable review of Locke.

I cannot give you any information as to the price of my books. All I can tell you is, that Milliken, of Dublin, published the Second Travels, and the Letters on the Law of Libel. His agent in London is *Fellowes, Ludgate Street.* Booksellers are very ready to send you every kind of information about what you owe for books you buy, but the accounts for those they sell are not quite so easily obtained.

I wish you by all means to let me know, not so much what you may approve in my forthcoming little work, as what may raise any objection in your mind. The preconceived notions which exist on such subjects are so numerous and so deeply rooted, that whoever writes, as a pioneer, (which, in a great degree, is my case,) requires the assistance of candid objectors,—to know in what direction the axe is wanted, in order to make a way.

With sincere esteem, I am, dear Miss L——,

Yours faithfully,

J. Blanco White.

To J. S. Mill, Esq.

Liverpool, June 27th, 1835.

My dear Sir,

——— I am convinced that no country in the world suffers more from false notions of Religion than England. Spain and Italy are indeed ruined by an established superstition of the grossest kind: but they have the advantage that the subject is treated as a mere concession to be made to ignorance, till some favourable moment may arrive for dislodging the abettors of the nuisance from their ruinous strongholds. But in England the most mischievous, because the most intolerant, superstition has succeeded in disguising itself into something like knowledge

and system. It exists in the garb of *philosophy*, meddling with everything, not as a mere matter of fact, but as reason and right; yet opposing too effectually the claims of *Reason* itself. What has hitherto baffled, and must for a long term baffle still, the plans conceived for educating the people? Is it not the claim to lay a certain catechism at the foundation of all the superstructure of Knowledge? On what condition is Education—instruction I should say, for there is very little *education* in the case—granted? Is it not that the children shall be bound to some body of Clergy, established or non-established? I know no other body of men than the small one to which I have attached myself—the *Unitarians*—who educate unconditionally.———

To the Rev. George Armstrong.

5, Chesterfield Street, Liverpool,
July 14th, 1835.

My dear Sir,

I have, at length, the pleasure of forwarding two copies of my little work,* as a testimony of my gratitude to you, for the valuable advice you gave me on reading the MS. of the first four Letters. I hope you will find nothing of consequence to object to in the 5th. My earnest wish is that this little work may induce Christians to think freely, and to examine impartially some most momentous questions, on the settling of which depends the peace and improvement of the Christian world. If I fail to throw light upon such questions, I should be at all events most happy if I should be the occasion of a fair discussion. The greatest evils of the Christian world proceed from want of freedom in the examination of long-established notions.

You will be glad to hear that, in spite of habitual weakness, and all the evils of a shattered nervous system, I enjoy more comfort here than has fallen to my lot anywhere else.

[* Letters on "Heresy and Orthodoxy."]

My having a house of my own is a very important circumstance in the present case. I am quiet at home. A very few friends see me; but I visit nowhere except to return the first civilities. I consider myself however very happy, in the close neighbourhood of the Rev. John H. Thom, a Unitarian Minister in this town.*—He has a Chapel, which I attend alternately with that of Mr. Martineau. I enjoy, in both those places of worship, a satisfaction to which I really was a total stranger. My regret is, that such Christian ministrations are confined to a small number. But I trust, the next generation of Unitarians will be more numerous and influential. The days of Orthodoxy are certainly gone by.

Let me hear your candid opinion of my little work at your leisure. You may now direct to this house, as in the date of this letter.

With sincere esteem, and gratitude,

I am, my dear Sir,

Ever faithfully yours,

J. Blanco White.

To Miss L——

5, Chesterfield Street, Liverpool,
July 14th, 1835.

My dear Miss L——,

It is only this afternoon that I have received a few copies of my little work. I send one for yourself, and another for Mr. L——, whom I do not forget, though I have seen him but once. We shall now see what plan of operations the Orthodox mean to take; whether to let the pamphlet drop into oblivion, or abuse me according to the full measure of theological wrath. I am the last person to judge of my own works. The moment they are in print I take a mortal dislike to them, and never look into them unless I am forced by circumstances. I am therefore ready to join with my readers, if they find

what I give them, dull, weak, and uninteresting. My interest, I can assure you, is for the *subject*, and my vague notions of what might be done are so far above what I can do, that, without affected humility, I am always thoroughly dissatisfied with myself. I am only anxious to raise an interest in the thinking part of the public. I wish people to examine impartially, and fearlessly, what bears the name of Christianity in this country, and not to drop off silently as many do, either into avowed Scepticism on all moral and religious subjects, or cling with frantic distress to what they perceive to be false, for fear of infidelity—as doubting, what is really doubtful, is called among us. What is called the *Protestant religion* is nothing but a mutilated system of popery; groundless, incongruous, and full of contradictions. I am not at all surprised when I hear that the number of Roman Catholics is increasing. The Protestant Divines are the most effective missionaries of Rome. Surely if we are to bow down to some *Church*, people will find more attractions, and much more consistency, in that of the Pope, than in that of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

I am writing in haste, not to delay the parcel. Let me hear from you, whenever you are inclined to write.

Believe me, with great esteem,

Yours ever faithfully,

J. Blanco White.

Letter from Lord Holland.

August 13th, 1835.

Dear Blanco,

I cannot forward Dr. Lant Carpenter's letter, without adding a line of good wishes and remembrances from myself, and all the inmates of this house. I look forward with great pleasure to reading your book, though, as you know, I am more than half convinced beforehand that you are critically, and historically, right in your doctrine. I really

think there seems a prospect of *religious* as well as political liberty being established both in Spain and Portugal, which will be a phenomenon indeed.

Yours,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

Letter to Lord Holland.

Liverpool, Aug. 15, 1835.

My dear Lord Holland,

Many thanks for Dr. Lant Carpenter's letter, and for your kind little note.

Ever since the Order in Council regarding Spain was published, I have been desirous to express to you my gratitude to yourself and your colleagues. You have acted in a way worthy of England, and if the liberal course which the Government are pursuing both at home and abroad is not interrupted by some unfortunate event, England will assuredly be the prop and stay of European liberty. How I should rejoice if I could learn before I die that religious tyranny had received its death-wound in Spain! A law declaring that no Spaniard should be compelled to external conformity, even though the public worship should still be exclusively Catholic, would be a wonderful improvement in Spain and Portugal. The hatred of the populace against the Friars is a good symptom: I only fear that it may be confined to the cities. I lament the excesses which take place, not only on the grounds of humanity, but of policy. I fear such horrors as the Papers mention, will produce a revulsion of feeling. I wonder how our friend the *Procer* Quintana is going on. An Oxford friend, to whom I gave a letter for him, saw him at Madrid four years ago. He seems to have been in the enjoyment of health. Arguelles does not appear to maintain his former popularity; he is still in love *con la Niña bonita*, as the Constitution used to be called in Spain. The cleverest Spaniards appear, at present, to be incapable of improving themselves by residence

abroad. The love of talking, and boasting at the *cafés*, is an incurable evil among them. In that respect, I understand that they are just as I left them, more than five-and-twenty years ago. But England, after all, may do more for Spain than Spain itself. My fears arise chiefly from the Tories and their *protegé*, Don Carlos. The spirit of the age is, however, decidedly against that party and its notions; there may be reverses, but freedom must prevail.

My affectionate remembrances to Lady Holland and all the family.

Yours ever sincerely,
J. Blanco White.

August 17, 1835.

At no period of my life have I enjoyed moments of purer happiness than during the present. As soon as that unexpected and agitating struggle * * * was at an end, I began to reap the reward of my determination. I am of course subject to attacks of that dejecting and distracting indigestion, which has the power to cast a veil of darkness over nature. But I have learnt to distinguish between reality and this peculiar delusion. I wait till the cloud has glided off, and am, all the while, certain that sunshine is behind it. But never before had I perceived what happiness may be bestowed on man, through the mere activity of his soul. I had to-day relieved the uneasiness and pain to which I am subject, especially in the morning; had dressed myself, and, as has been my custom for some time past, had opened my window, and seated myself in view of the Heavens, to collect my mind for the daily tribute of adoration to

my Maker. The mere act of directing my mind to Him, in the presence of his glorious works, filled me with an inexpressible, though tranquil and rational delight. I said to myself, What a glorious gift conscious existence is in itself! Heaven must essentially consist in the absence of whatever disturbs the quiet enjoyment of that consciousness—in the intimate conviction of the *presence of God.*

To J. S. Mill, Esq.

Liverpool, Aug. 25, 1835.

My dear Sir,

*——— It gives me much pleasure that you like my *Heresy and Orthodoxy.* You cannot conceive the degree of horror with which I look upon *dogmatic religion.* The notion of establishing a system of Metaphysics and History, as the means of eternal happiness for mankind, is not more absurd than it is mischievous. This country suffers from it more than any other. In Italy, in Spain, the *national* mind is dead, or nearly so, and the poison cannot work on. In England there is life enough to struggle against that bane of Europe, but that life has allowed its principles to assimilate so much with the poison, that it is difficult to conceive how it can be removed without imminent peril. Yet removed it must be, or England must morally (perhaps even politically) decline. *Dii omen avertant!*

Liverpool, Aug. 28th, 1835.

As the idea of *cause* is originally excited by man's consciousness of his own power of causation, that idea presents itself, in the infancy of mankind, in a human form. Every phenomenon is believed to be

caused by an invisible *man* or *woman*, more or less powerful, more or less kind or malicious. This natural tendency remains in the mind at all periods. When the progress of the human race had begun to deliver it from Mythological Polytheism, when Christ had proclaimed the purest *Deism*, and spread it in the most extraordinary manner, by means which cannot be reduced to the rank of such occurrences as we very vaguely call *natural*, the tendency in question developed itself in a most surprising manner among Christians, and by making Christ to be God himself—the *Eternal Cause* was again reduced to the original shape in which it appears to the infant mind. It is true, that by thus indulging the imagination all the raptures of sentimental love are easily produced in reference to the Supreme Cause, the Eternal and blessed God; but the reference is made to an idol—to a *man*,—or rather to a monstrous conception, made up of the most glaring contradictions. And what is the impression which that image of God leaves in regard to the Deity? It is that of a Supreme Cause involved in difficulties in consequence of his creation; a Deity that must labour in a state of disguise and degradation, to find a remedy against some fatal consequences of his work; who must die to destroy death (such is the figurative phraseology, though in spite of all, death continues as powerful as ever); who must be a victim for sin, without removing sin. The representations of the Deity in the Pagan Mythologies are so evidently absurd, that

they could not do mischief in a state of moral and political improvement; but this, though perhaps more absurd, has its absurdity so disguised by natural sentiment, by kindness, goodness, and sympathy, that it will long continue to pervert Christianity, and check moral and intellectual progress in the most enlightened parts of the world.

Sept. 4, 1835.

To Dr. Neander.

[Begun on the day when I received his Third Volume (Church History) dedicated to me.]

My dear friend and brother,

I will not commit to a dead language what I have to say to you on the present occasion. The feelings of my heart cannot be conveyed in the set phrases of a Latin letter. Alas! that I should have anything to express but gratitude for the honour, the thoroughly unmerited honour, you have done me in dedicating to me the third volume of your admirable Church History. But so it is. The step which my conscience compelled me to take at the beginning of the last winter, my separation from the Church of England, my declaration of *Unitarian* principles, my painful separation from the Archbishop of Dublin and his family, which I conceived (and experience has confirmed it) to be a *necessary* consequence of my public dissent from the Church in which he holds so high a station, all these circumstances made the wounds of my heart bleed at the sight of your most kind present, and the short Latin letter* which accompanies it. Perhaps (oh that it may be so!) your happier position in

* Suscipias, vir optime atque dilectissime, donum hoc exiguum cum iis animi sensibus, qui me, ut hoc donum tibi offeram impellunt, societatis intimæ, qua Dei Spiritus animos nostros invicem conjunxit, tesseram et quasi sigillum.—A. NEANDER.

Germany will make this my feeling unintelligible to you. I will therefore plainly and honestly lay it before you. Smarting under the results of my recent separation from the Church of this country, perceiving every day more and more that the ties of the closest friendship snap like threads in the fire, in cases like my own, I am pained to the utmost by the idea that, on hearing my change, you may repent the honour which you have bestowed upon my name, and withdraw the kindness and friendship with which you have hitherto regarded me. Forgive, my dear and highly venerated friend, if, in the present agony of my heart, I can doubt whether the truly Christian, unbounded, toleration, which I know you to possess, can extend to myself. The letter which you have addressed to me at the head of the volume, breathes such a pure, heavenly spirit of charity, that I cannot but reproach myself for these my fears. The accompanying little work will after all inform you about the step I have taken, much better than I can do it by letter. Of this I am certainly confident, that whatever you may think of my tenets, nothing could have made me more unworthy of your esteem, than a continuance of my external connection with a strictly dogmatic establishment, with which my convictions so essentially disagree. To have allowed myself to die, approving externally of such an establishment, would have invalidated (certainly, in the eyes of God) whatever sacrifices I have made to the love of Truth. The tone and determination of my mind, I humbly trust, remain exactly as before. My love of Christ is the same; my prayer to live and die in conformity with the Spirit that was in Him, is as earnest as ever before. If I am wrong in my views, I cannot help it: I have done my best to be right. But I am confident (and I have endeavoured to prove it to the Christian world) that the crime of *intellectual* heresy is imaginary, and that Christianity is not *Orthodoxy*.

The recent proof of your esteem and affection has so

much increased my attachment to you, that though the bitter cup which I am still exhausting on account of my separation from the Church might well make me insensible to anything else, yet the pain which any diminution of your kindness would give me, would be acute enough to be distinguished among those which I am hourly suffering.

My health, after which you so kindly inquire, is very bad. I am confined to my solitary rooms under a severe attack of illness. You are to understand that I have exiled myself from Dublin, to avoid greater pains than those of separation.

May God give you his blessing, and prosper all your works towards the union of all the human race, under the pure, free, and ennobling spirit of the Gospel.

Your ever sincere, and obliged friend, and brother,

J. B. W.

Sept. 30th, 1835.

How deep and settled the notion that the only means of salvation is to believe things incredible, must have been, at all times, to produce the following passage :—

. . "for there is no Christian, that means to be saved by believing rightly, can ever believe such impossible passages of grossness."—Twelfth Night, Act iii., scene 2.

This is the spontaneous expression of an universal feeling. Christianity, according to that universal notion, is a school for the practice of believing what is incredible. This is the highest virtue of Christians ! !

" Thou shalt hold the opinion of Pythagoras, ere I

will allow of thy wits."—Ib., Act iv., scene 2. This is the Orthodox rule to judge of men's wits.

The same day.

The rain has kept me in the whole morning; and I have been incessantly employed in a variety of mental pursuits. Though weak, I have been free from pain; and I may say that for three or four hours I have been perfectly happy in the enjoyment of mental pleasures! My soul turns, in thankfulness, to the eternal source of these enjoyments—to the eternal Mind, the father of my soul. He is wise above all human conception, and he knows why he permits such happiness to be poisoned by the widely-extended superstition which seems to have no other object but the embittering of our intellectual existence. What a mass of mental misery, that strange compound of truth, degraded by error, which is called *Religion,* or Christianity, is daily accumulating, especially in this country! What servile fears it spreads, what anxieties it occasions, of what a waste of intellectual power it is the cause! And yet the voice of God within us, the oracle consecrated in our breast, (would men but listen to it,) is clearly condemning such folly, as that of fearing that the free use of our mental faculties can be the source of eternal misery to rational creatures! It is from these enjoyments indeed, that I learn the character of my benevolent Maker. It is from these pleasures, above all others, that I feel assured that he will protect my happiness for ever.

Liverpool, Oct. 2nd, 1835.

Ὀρθρου, ὅταν δυσόκνως ἐξεγείρῃ, πρόχειρον ἔστω, ὅτι ἐπὶ ἀνθρώπου ἔργον ἐγείρομαι· ἔτι οὖν δυσκολαίνω, εἰ πορεύομαι ἐπὶ τὸ ποιεῖν, καὶ ὧν ἕνεκεν γέγονα, καὶ ὧν χάριν προῆγμαι εἰς τὸν κόσμον;—Marc. Antonin., Lib. v. § 1.

. . εὐθεῖαν πέραινε, ἀκολουθῶν τῇ φύσει τῇ ἰδίᾳ καὶ τῇ κοινῇ· μία δὲ ἀμφοτέρων τούτων ἡ ὁδός.—Ib., § 3.

Linea rectissima, brevissima.

Urged by these considerations, and taking the last beautiful proverbial expression (I do not know whose it is, but, surely, the author was an honest man) more than ever for my only guide—disregarding, accordingly, all that fatal policy, falsely called moderation, which is the most powerful enemy of Truth, and the greatest obstacle to the progress and improvement of mankind,—I intend to begin a little work, the title of which shall be *The People's Preservative against Superstition.* I intend it to be a counterpart to the *Poor Man's Preservative against Popery,* a work which I wrote under the highest paroxysm of the *Popish* spirit, which I ever suffered since I re-embraced the profession of Christianity in England. It is true that I was far from the hierarchical spirit of the Church of Rome: it was against that spirit that I was exerting myself boldly and honestly. Yet the desire to support a *Church,* i. e. a hierarchy of some

sort—the *spirit* of my clerical profession, had regained a certain degree of activity by my having *actively* joined the clergy of the Church of England. It was, however, fortunate for me that the lurking evil was made to appear: else, I might have continued unconsciously cherishing it in my soul. It was fortunate that my residence at Oxford brought the evil seed to its maturity. It was then that I was able to examine the plant, to taste the poisonous bitterness of its fruits, and finally to gain courage enough to root it up. But the *Popish* spirit, which had, during this period of revived early habits, acquired most power over me, was that of *mysticism*. I was bred up in it; few men have been more systematically and perseveringly exposed to the influence of *sentimental* religion than myself. As the character of that religion is identical among Catholics and Protestants, (witness the admiration of the Evangelicals for Pascal, and the Jansenist School of Port Royal,) I found myself at home as soon as I allowed my early feeling to revive. This will clearly appear to any competent judge, who shall consider the perfect similarity of my *devotional* style with that of the Evangelicals. Yet, I did not copy from them; yet, I checked myself from an insuperable feeling of internal shame, which, in spite of my surrender to that *ascetic humility* which exalts the heroic courage of making yourself *a fool*, I could not shake off when I was writing in the whining, blubbering, sentimental tone of the Confessing Methodist,—of the

self-accusing convert to Evangelicism, who draws tears from the ladies' eyes, at a Tea and Bible party.

It is for this error that I intend to atone. The *Poor Man's Preservative* is, perhaps, the most able of all my works: it is the most likely to produce an effect on the persons to whom it is directed. Whatever I say there of Catholicism IS TRUE; but what I say of Protestantism is erroneous. The Protestantism which exists under the form of the *Church of England,* is far from being the *correlative* good to that great evil. It is, indeed, itself an *evil,* and the more dangerous for being disguised in the character of an antagonist to what is entirely wrong. It is a false and mischievous remedy used against a destructive disease. The only *Preservative against Popery* is the total rooting out of *Superstitious Christianity.* I am determined to attempt a popular work with that view. The outcry it will raise will be terrible,—and I confess that I shudder when I think that *my friends* will join in it. But I must employ the short time of life which I can reasonably expect, in the way that I think most useful. *Linea rectissima, linea brevissima.*

Oct. 4th, 1835.

This morning, Mr. Martineau, in a sermon full of the bright sparks of genius, which always appear even in the most hasty of his compositions, remarked that the enthusiasts turn away from the regularity of Nature's laws, and dwell on the single events of

fortuity. (I like his word.) He also observed the analogy between this turn of mind, and the avidity of the same class for the *miraculous,* which essentially consists in *detached* effects, unconnected with, or rather opposed to, the established laws, and therefore *singular* in the highest degree. These observations are perfectly true; and their truth is confirmed by one step further in the process of generalization—by tracing them up to the very root of superstition. The root and its essential character is best observed in the original form of superstition itself—namely, Idolatry, and Polytheism. The natural tendency of the uncultivated Mind, is to limit and individualize the Deity. Man wants a God like himself—like the individual to whom the child runs for help, or before whom it cries in fear and terror, trying to avert violence. Following this tendency, and unwilling to listen to the dictates of reason, which invite him to *Faith,* to Trust in the author of the evidently rational order of the Universe, he breaks the idea of the all-guiding power, into a multitude of agents to whom he applies for help, and whom he wishes to gain by flattery and slavish submission. The *Christianized* enthusiast (I except the true, unsophisticated Roman Catholic,) does not create petty Deities, whose business is to attend to the business of Man in detail; but he confines God, the Creator and Governor of the world, to every single spot where he wants his power and his partial favour. There God must appear to do, expressly for the enthusiast, some indivi-

dual thing he wants at that moment. This spirit of *singularity* produces that remarkable aversion to the visible Universe, which is found inseparable from the enthusiastic piety prevalent among Christians. The "Heavens declare the glory of God," in vain for them. They stop their ears against the accurate and faithful interpreter of that heavenly voice, Science, which they abhor, because it shows the regularity of the Universe. Their God must be coined into a number of little images, like the Teraphim of old, which they may apply to their little wants, as the savage applies his *Fetiche*.

The readiness to believe in the supernatural, which is found in such people, is a necessary consequence of that state of mind. The notion of a miracle is that of a work of God, unconnected with the universe and its laws. But for one that believes that God is constantly producing detached events, subject to no general law, miracles must appear in the light of the favourite and constant occupation of the Deity. It is true that God is present everywhere. But Omnipresence for such people, is not combined with the idea of Infinitude. Their prevalent notion is that of limitation. God, for them, is in every place where they want an *individual* operation from him: there they conceive the Deity, but reduced to the spot as much as a human agent would be.

To this tendency of the human mind we may trace the popularity of the belief in the Divinity of Christ. The pure Gospel had declared God to be a Spirit.

This was very unsatisfactory to the superstitious mind. Hence the gradual reducing of God to the dimensions and form of a Man. According to the established and popular doctrine you may figure to yourself the *Lord,* doing what you wish from him. You may imagine him everywhere, occupying a certain space, and displacing any part of nature which stands in the way of some convenience of the petitioner. I am quite sure, from everything I have observed, that most Christians have no other God but a human image. The Roman Catholics have it carved in wood, or painted on canvass. The Protestants conceive it in their imagination. There are indeed some among them (Dr. Arnold for instance) who lament that the use of the crucifix is not common in England.

October 5th, 1835.

Most of the vices of the political establishments which are producing the awful crisis of our times, by the all-pervading irritation in which they keep the body of Society, have their origin in the *Church* notions, which exclusively regulated the European body for many ages, and which entered into the formation of everything in that body. Everything was regulated by Theology. Even when matters of science were concerned, Divines were the judges. Hence the circumstance that all foundations, all establishments, were made in *perpetuity,* even in regard to the most minute details. Everything of this kind was treated like the Monastic Institutions, where the *Rule* pre-

determined, for ever, even the most indifferent actions of those who professed it. The great step which Society has to take at present is that of changing this all-pervading error: to learn to act upon the irrefragable principle, that everything in man and his concerns is progressive; that nothing can be confined to the same forms for ever, unless we destroy at once the life within it. We have indeed examples of this process of *Mummification* in some Eastern Nations. Thank heaven! it is impracticable in Europe.

Liverpool, October 7th, 1835.

I am most anxious that the friend into whose hands my Memorandum Books shall come *after my death*, (*I trust* it will be my dear friend the Rev. J. H. Thom) may have every possible means to do justice to the character of the Archbishop of Dublin, in spite of the clouds which have hovered between that excellent man and myself. * * * *

To the Rev. Blanco White.

Redesdale, October 6, 1835.

My dear friend,

The sum of £100 has been this day placed by the Archbishop's desire at your Banker's in Liverpool. You will not, I am convinced, by refusing to accept this yearly little addition to your few means of comfort, suffer us to feel that you are changed in heart towards us—but rather will consider it a pledge that we would have received the same at your hands, in similar circumstances. * * * *

Ever your affectionate,

E. W.

To Mrs. Whately.

October 7, 1835.

My dear friend,

I yesterday put into the Post a letter which I had prepared to send the day before, and which I brought back again in my pocket through forgetfulness. This morning —this moment, I have received yours of yesterday, the contents of which, in regard I mean to the Archbishop's present of £100, have made me, as it were, a mass of confused feelings which I endeavour in vain to set in order. One thing however is certain, and perfectly clear amidst this confusion, that his, your's, and my heart, are bound together by a bond of kindness, which the power of inferior passions and prejudices, however violently they might act in our breasts through human error and infirmity, could not sever or loosen. But I knew and felt this, without the assistance of the proof involved in your late bounty. Indeed no proof *of that kind* could, by itself, produce or maintain such attachment, such trust, (in the midst of severe trials of friendship,) as exist in my heart with regard to both of you. Yet I wish you had not taxed yourselves in this manner for my sake. Since I settled myself in this house, after the first heavy expense was over, I began, for the first time in my life, to be really economical, and the habit of that virtue is now well settled. The test of its genuineness is to be found in my abstinence from *books*. I can now look at the most tempting Foreign and English Catalogue, and after casting a longing eye on some Articles, say to myself— it must not be. But your remittance will, though at the risk of weakening the habit, allow me some little indulgence. I will take care however to contain myself within the strictest bounds of moderation. I have no more to say to you and your dear husband, but that I have uninterruptedly loved you as my sister and brother, ever since we became intimate. God bless you both, and every one on whose happiness your own happiness depends.

October 14th, 1835.

Paley says somewhere (I believe in his Natural Theology) that the admission that there is a living God, is a great step indeed. I have always thought so myself, but it is only since I absolutely rejected all the doctrines which overshadow and obscure the unity of God, that I have experienced in myself the infinite importance of the heartfelt acknowledgment of the existence of an intelligent Author of the world. It is true, that, since my first mental change in England, I have never doubted that great dogma: I should rather say, *I have believed it;* for there is a very common state of mind in which doctrines are *not doubted,* and yet, strictly speaking, they are not *believed:* they are not doubted, because the will has determined that every doubt shall be instantly dismissed. But my belief in God has been of a positive kind; it has been a thorough conviction. My present experience proves, however, that the moral and intellectual influence of that belief was disturbed and weakened by the work of imagination, which represents God more or less circumscribed by the body of a Man. I am convinced that all modifications whatever of the doctrine of the *incarnate God,* are of the *nature of idolatry.* I despise the superstitious horror of idolatry which most people derive from the Hebrew Scriptures. It is a notion of impurity, of communion with Devils, of abomination, &c.; representations well suited to the mind of a semi-barbarous people. But I am intimately persuaded that idolatry,

from its very nature, is most injurious to the mind of man. The reason is, that it sets limits to the Deity, that it confines God to a particular spot, and thus destroys, or at least weakens, the only true idea of Him which the human intellect can have, namely, that he is a *Spirit*. It is true that we have in ourselves the fact of a *spirit* confined to the limits of our body. But this does not alter the case: it is, on the contrary, the natural foundation on which Idolatry is forbidden. Idolatry positively confirms that conception—it represents the Deity as a Spirit circumscribed by one or more bodies. It makes Him essentially a Man; for what is Man but a spirit limited to a certain portion of something, which is not itself? In vain do logical religionists attempt to do away the idolatrous tendency of the *incarnation*, by saying that God, besides being fully in Christ, is also every where else. A verbal *contradiction* must necessarily be ineffectual on the mind. One of the two *contradictions* is believed; the other is repeated, but has no effect. Hence the fact, that those who believe in the Man-God, neglect *God the Spirit*. Lightly as the doctrine of the incarnate God lay upon my mind, it nevertheless disturbed and weakened the influence of my belief in God *the Spirit*. I can compare the moral effects of my belief in God, combined with various degrees of belief in his Incarnation, with the pure belief which I now have in God, as described by Jesus—*God is a Spirit*. My love, my confidence, my reliance for life and eternity, in that living God,

the Creator of the world, in whom I live, and move, and have my being, are infinitely above the feeling of that kind, which I had in the most devout moments of my past life. The reason is—I have purified my mind from every degree of *Idolatry*.

The same Day.

Idolatry, or the representation of God by images, εἴδωλα, whether material, or from the imagination, is the result of the most imperfect conceptions of the human mind. It is inseparably connected with the infancy of mankind, collectively and individually; and it must keep the mind in an infantine state wherever it is, in any degree, made one of its fundamental notions. A mind that rests his hopes on the Deity, after reducing it to a form or state, which comes within the power of the imagination, has necessarily reduced his religion to *sentiment*. All sentiment is subject to changes, arising from the various states of the organic faculties on which it chiefly depends. Now the main object of the Spiritual, i. e. Mental religion, is to ground the moral conduct, and the hope of the truly religious man, on a *rock*,—on a ground quite above the changes and delusions of this mortal life. That ground can be found alone in the eternal, the immutable world of Reason. In that world there are no images whatever. A God made Man does not, cannot, belong to it.

To the Provost of Oriel.

5, Chesterfield Street, Liverpool,
October 15, 1835.

My dear Provost,

The kindness of the letter, in which you acquaint me with your having finally come to the resolution of taking off my name from the Oriel books, as I requested in January last, allays in one respect the grief which I feel at being no longer a Member of that Society; while, in another, it increases my detestation of the system which compels us to this separation. I enjoy, however, the satisfaction of having, by means of my early request to you, prevented the pain which both you and myself would have suffered, if either your own notions of duty, or the decided wish of the Fellows, had compelled you to remove my name in the way of expulsion. To be *expelled* from Oriel College for *heresy*, would have been too painful to me; not, indeed, on *my* account, but on that of the College itself. I should lament to see the name of a Society which in my mind is associated with so much that I love, exposed by such an act of antiquated bigotry, to the sense of contempt which it would raise among all unprejudiced men, in the present times. My feelings in regard to the *University* have been so much altered, since 1829, by the repeated exhibitions of its thoroughly Monastic spirit, that I will not take any precaution to prevent its adding one more exposure, if the leading Members should be inclined to celebrate the only kind of *Auto da Fe* which they can at present enjoy. I ordered copies of my work* to be sent to all the Heads of Houses with whom I am personally acquainted. Let them proceed to the removal of my name from the Graduates' List, if they feel so inclined. Such a sentence of expulsion could not possibly injure me, and it would fail even to mortify me. It would, on the contrary, give more celebrity than I ever expected, or wished for.

* Observations on Heresy and Orthodoxy.

I cannot account for your not having received the copy of my work, which I ordered for you. You tell me that you have not read it through, and I do not know whether, persuaded as I am that it can neither profit nor please you, I can wish you to make the effort required to peruse it. Do not suppose, my dear and respected friend, that I charge you with wilful blindness; I am thoroughly convinced of your conscientiousness, but I know how utterly impossible it is to be impartial under a certain combination of circumstances. The fault is not yours: it belongs to the system which has identified you with itself.

My affection and gratitude to you will always live in my heart. The only circumstance in this case which gives me severe pain, is the impossibility of my ever again living under you as a member of Oriel College.

Believe me, my dear Provost,
Ever affectionately yours,
J. B. W.

October 22nd, 1835.

Every human error and infirmity should be treated by the Christian Philosopher with tenderness, except when it assumes the character of sanctity. When *sanctified* by superstition and bigoted pride, error acquires such a poisonous and destructive nature, that whoever perceives it, is justified in procuring its extermination, as that of the most venomous reptile.

N.B. Need I protest against the application of this treatment to persons?

To Miss L——.

5, Chesterfield Street, Liverpool,
November 27th, 1835.

My dear Miss L——,

The philosophy of language is a very useful study. It is one, besides, which may be carried on by every reflecting mind without much labour of reading and reference. It is necessary, however, to be put on the way of inquiry within the mind itself; but there may be differences in the systems of arrangement and nomenclature, without affecting the essence of the study itself. I believe I recommended to you a translation of Becker's German Grammar, published by Murray, in 1830; which, though curtailed considerably of the philosophical part, in order to give it a chance of sale in England, contains, nevertheless, very valuable hints, which a thinking mind may pursue and improve. I have the original German, which is far better. I wish I had a work of the same author, entitled *Organism der Sprache*, in which he has given his views of the abstract principles of Language. An English Grammar, written upon the principles of Becker's German Grammar, would be very useful. It would require great tact in the writer in order to make it palatable to English readers; the teachers, especially those who are, at present, the oracular expounders of Murray's Grammar and Exercises, would be the first to set their faces against any such work. Teachers of such branches of education are the most obstinate of *Conservatives*. In proportion as a teacher knows little, and that little mechanically, is his horror of innovation; for what will become of him if any change takes place? This is common to all teachers, and particularly so to the teachers of Religion. But I shall keep to Grammar at present. All languages must depend for their structure on the laws of our minds: the varieties observable in their systems cannot overstep the limits of our modes of mental conception: they must all

have something in common. These most general and comprehensive principles should be traced upwards, or analytically, by the examination of languages of various *families*; for those which are derived from the same stock do not present very remarkable differences, in their respective arrangements of verbal signs. Such a comparison, however, requires immense labour. I should recommend you to examine Becker's principles, as they appear in his German Grammar, and to work on, by means of self-observation, in reference to English. You might also read Destout—Tracy afterwards—and judge for yourself. When you have made some progress in the analysis of Language, you should read some *truly Aristotelic* Logic; when you will perceive, what I believe few among those who profess that kind of knowledge have observed, that Logic is, for the greatest part, a collection of technical Rules, founded on the *classification* to which you allude. I once began to collect notes for a work on that subject; but external circumstances calling me to other things, I dropt it. The Syllogism is nothing but a result of the classification of things, which the mind naturally and necessarily forms in forming a Language. All abstract terms are classifications; or rather the *labels* of the classes which the mind has settled.

But I must limit myself to the extent of the paper on which I am writing. You say "the Milk is sour" appears to be an equivalent to "the Milk is sour Milk." This shows that you have not perceived the shade of difference between the *Attributive* and the *Predicative Adjectives*. The substantial equivalence cannot be denied; but the mode of conception is not the same. The Milk *is* sour, alludes to the classification of ideas; Milk is in the class sour; in *sour Milk* the mind forms a compound notion, made up of *sourness and Milk;* it does not analyse. But I refer you to Becker.

I have been rather better of late, though full of such troubles as must fall upon an old bachelor who keeps house.

I have been obliged to change servants, and am just at the beginning of a new experiment. I hope I shall have some peace.

Yours ever sincerely,
J. Blanco White.

December 15th, 1835.

I have finished the Life of Sir James Mackintosh. I have read it with great interest. It is curious that a letter of Sidney Smith on the character of Mackintosh has struck me above every thing else, in a book where there are many admirable compositions of that kind. But one particular source of my pleasure in reading that book was, my recollection of Sir James himself. I have frequently repeated, and I stated it in an account of him which I published in the Spanish Periodical *Las Variedades,* that I never was in company with Sir James Mackintosh, even for a quarter of an hour, without hearing something from him which I wished to retain, and make a part of my own mind. I heartily wish I had cultivated his acquaintance much more than I did. But the miserable state of my health while I lived at Holland House, and the morbid feelings of distrust in my mental powers which the brilliant society I met there produced, from the beginning of my residence in England, never allowed me to enjoy the intellectual pleasures to which the company which usually met at Lord Holland's invited me. It was not, however, a sense of my natural inferiority which

made that splendid society actually painful to me, but the perception, that the accidental disadvantage of my speaking a foreign language placed me at a much further distance, from those with whom I came in contact, than that which nature had fixed between us. This feeling was certainly much embittered by distressing and incessant illness.

But to return to the Life of Sir James Mackintosh. The mention he makes of me in a letter to Dr. Copleston, though kind, wants, I really think, correctness. "The candour of Blanco White is remarkable, but his indignation at the necessity to dissemble, long imposed upon him, makes him not so fair as Grotius, in his account of the opinions of his former fellow-religionists."—Years have elapsed since I wrote on Catholicism, and a most complete change of feeling has taken place in me in regard to the Church of England, and indeed to all *dogmatical* churches. Nevertheless, I cannot discover that I have been wanting in candour to any human being. I gave an account of the Romanist system of doctrines, and Church government—as well as of the moral results of both, as I knew them by long experience. Grotius had to do with living rivals, and persecutors: and his candour had a fair field for exercise. I had no quarrel with individuals. What candour can be exercised respecting *established* doctrines and systems? Have *opinions* feelings and passions, for which we must make allowances? My duty was to be accurate: and I am not conscious of having

neglected that duty for an instant. I am confident that there is not a Roman Catholic Divine, out of England, (for in England the political question blinds every man upon that subject,) who will charge my statements with inaccuracy. I wish Sir James Mackintosh had specified the points of my *comparative* unfairness.

Among other things which have excited a lively interest in me, is the frequent evidence of Sir James's conscientious anxiety about religious tenets. What a mass of evil *dogmatic* Christianity has brought upon the world! The finest understandings, filled as they are in youth with the notion of the vital necessity of having a right *system* of Faith, can hardly free themselves entirely from a degree of restlessness in connection with that supposed duty. To this is added the superstitious anxiety of relatives and friends, who avail themselves of the weakness of illness and approaching dissolution, to force upon those they love, the necessity of some declaration of faith. It is melancholy to observe even the intelligent and kind daughter of Sir James, (I knew her as Miss Fanny Mackintosh at Holland House, where her good-nature and unaffected cleverness made her a universal favourite,) extorting some kind of confession of Faith from her expiring father, as a passport for heaven. When shall this horrible mental persecution cease?

Dec. 17th, 1835.

Whoever attempts to remove any religious prejudices, is assailed with the popular charge that it is cruel to shake the foundation on which millions of souls have built their best hopes. But it is easy to see that if the objection deserves any regard whatever, it must be the duty of every good man to leave even the worst religious errors, undisturbed all over the earth. The worst superstitions, when they have become part of a national creed, afford a satisfaction to millions, which may be considered as equal in value to them, to what are called best hopes among us. But there is a perpetual shifting, on this subject, from the interests of truth, to the gratification of feeling, and many other interests. 'Religion is, at one moment, treated as a *national* concern, at another as an intellectual one, as a question of pure truth. In vain, however, shall any one protest against these evasions. There are too many able men, determined to keep them open.

Dec. 18th, 1835.

The arrival of a parcel of most tempting books, and the disagreeable effect of the bad translation of Grimm's Correspondence, which I had begun to read, have jointly made me give it up. I have this evening read the introduction to a view of Kant's system, written in French, by L. F. Schön. It is very good. Besides this work, I have received Sismondi's *Julia Severa;—Du Polythéisme Romain considéré dans ses*

rapports avec la Philosophie Grecque et la Religion Chrétienne, ouvrage posthume de Benjamin Constant; *precédé d'une introduction de* M. J. Matter; *I Quattro Poeti Italiani,* a handsome collection of Italian poetry, of which I had a copy at Dublin; and two copies (credite posteri!) of the abridgment of Dupuis' *L'Origine des Cultes,* which the conscientious Louis Philippe has lately endeavoured to suppress. One of the two copies I intend to give as a present to a friend whom it cannot injure; and to whom I am sure it will be of use. It is absurd to suppose that a man who professes Christianity, *rationally,* may be shaken in his belief by that book. There is no doubt, however, that such as identify the Christianity of Rome with the Christianity of Christ, will be ready to follow Dupuis in his anti-historical dream. The facts however which he proves—the adoption by the early Christians of many parts of the Solar Mythos, as portions of the Christian doctrine, should be known. Would heaven! we could show the original sources of the innumerable corruptions of the Gospel, and separate them from the luminous view of religion which Christ published to mankind! But the still existing Priesthoods, Romanist and Protestant, will for a long time, by their superstition, ambition, and mental oppression, continue to spread not only disbelief, but hatred of Christianity.

5, Chesterfield-street, Liverpool,
Dec. 21st, 1835.

My dear J——,

I well remember your kind visit to Oxford. How far was I then from thinking that I should settle myself at Liverpool! But strange as such an idea would have appeared to me at that time, I nevertheless find that my choice was a lucky one. I have not enjoyed a more quiet period in England than that of the last six months. I have had some little trouble with servants, but by the kindness of some Liverpool ladies I am now very comfortable, even in that respect. When I return from my daily walk to the Athenæum, and find every thing quiet, the house perfectly clean, my plain furniture in the best order, and my books ready to whisper wisdom and peace to my mind, my heart expands with thankfulness, and I almost forget that I have ever been in trouble. I have been besides more free from bodily suffering than has been usual with me for many years. Were it not for growing feebleness, I might say I was younger than I was ten years ago, but any little thing is enough to upset me.

CHAPTER VI.

EXTRACTS FROM JOURNALS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

1836.—Ætat. 61.

Liverpool, Jan. 1st, 1836.

THE year, just gone by, has been a most important one to me. During its first half, I had much to suffer, as this Journal will attest; but the last six months have been one of the most tranquil periods of my life. I now clearly perceive that my mind was under an improper bias, as long as I remained externally connected with the Church of England. My theological opinions had never been thoroughly examined; there were boundaries beyond which I hardly allowed myself to look, though I had the strongest doubts of the validity of the principles on which those boundaries were prescribed. My fear of giving pain to those with whom I lived, and whom I loved (as I do still), made me shrink, not only from expressing, but from deliberately holding opinions, which they considered as totally unchristian, and impious. As dissimulation is contrary to my nature, as I should have detested myself for being in a totally different state of mind from that in which my friends supposed me, I unconsciously recoiled

from the admission of views, which must lead to the extremity either of thorough dissimulation, or of a separation from those whom I loved. But as this timidity was not cherished, it could only delay, not prevent, the natural issue of my studies and meditations. Many will say, that I have ceased to be a Christian. This does not disturb me, in the least. I know that my religious principle was never so active, and influential, as it is at present. I had a faith of acquiescence; I now have it of conviction. My love of God was never so real and active. He sees my heart. In Him I fully trust.

Jan. 11th, 1836.

I have frequently repeated that bodies of men, such as clergies or priesthoods, will act in accordance with the tendencies of the worst part of their members. I have made this assertion with little effect of conviction, on those to whom I addressed it. And yet, general experience confirms the fact, as may be proved by the proverbial sayings expressing distrust in bodies, of which the members, taken individually, produce a very different impression. Not one election took place in Spain, while I lived there, which did not occasion the frequent repetition of the proverb,—*La Canoniga, buena; la Cabilda, mala.* The language of the proverb is the broken Spanish spoken by the imported negro slaves, the *talky-talky* of the Spanish negroes. It means,—'the Canons are good; but the Chapter is naughty;' and is supposed to have

expressed the opinion of a poor freed negro, who, wishing for one of the menial offices in a Spanish cathedral, solicited the favour of every member of the Chapter, was encouraged by each of them, and disappointed by all.

The proverb contains the important moral truth, that men are not ashamed to do in a body, what they would shrink from, individually. But the evil does not stop here. Bodies of men, as such, have no conscience; yet bodies of men, as such, have peculiar and strong temptations. How will those temptations be resisted? It will probably be said, that they will be resisted by the virtuous individuals in the body. But the temptation, in most cases, does not address its allurement to the virtuous individuals. Such minds are under an habitual determination, not to avail themselves of the privileges of the body, for selfish purposes; and when any encroachment in favour of the body is promoted by the mass of the coarse, and selfish, who must naturally be the majority,—they will judge of the rest according to their own standard, and consequently assist them, or, at all events, will not resist them, in the endeavours to promote the interests *of the body*.

It is universally acknowledged that all *corporations* have a spirit of their own, which, in spite of the perpetual change of the members, continues the same for ages. This is the result of an invariable law, which may be understood by the assistance of what has just been said. Every individual will perceive

what is most agreeable to his desires, in whatever circumstances he may be placed; and he will modify everything that comes near him, to the full extent of his power, so as to answer to his wishes and interests. Virtue, of course, will, in the individual, be a check to this power of selfish attraction. According, however, to the simple principle above stated, a body of men with peculiar interests will have nothing, *within it*, to check the power of corporate selfishness. The selfish individuals, in the body, will give full sway to their desires and passions, under the cover that it is not for themselves, but for their body, that they wish for power, privileges, and wealth. The honest minority will give full credit to these assertions, because in their own case they know them to be true. There may appear, now and then, (especially when part of the community, out of the privileged body, begin to grow jealous of it,) a bold man who will venture to join the popular complaints; but such remonstrants are, generally, crushed by the intense hatred of the selfish and ambitious members, and find no support in the honest and timid.—This is the reason why no privileged body whatever, is known to have reformed its own abuses. Like a thoroughly demoralized regiment, they must be disbanded; else whatever number of fresh men you may put into them, will soon be assimilated to the existing body.

What has been said is best exhibited in priesthoods, or, as we now call them, Churches. One of the oldest, and most pernicious, errors of mankind is that, which

supposes the necessity of forming a body of men who, in the name of heaven, shall take the guidance of the religious principle of all the rest. Once grant that such bodies exist, for the benefit of morality, or much more, for the salvation of the eternal souls of men, and a most active, encroaching principle is brought into existence, which must be perpetually at work upon society, to bring it completely under the power of the priesthood. The usurpations of Popery are the natural result of the existence of a priesthood, which, more than any other in the world, identifies its own supremacy with the highest conceivable interests of mankind. Hardly any of the ancient religions afforded such plausible pretexts to the ambition of its priesthood, as the priesthoods, which have seized upon Christianity as their peculiar domain, derive from the doctrines of the Gospel. The ancient religions were not much concerned with the consciences of men, and had no definite doctrines regarding a future state. But Christianity pervades the whole being of man, extending its views to an unlimited existence, in a future world. If any men are made the peculiar dispensers of the benefits, real or supposed, of such a religion, the body of those men has a decided tendency to absorb all other power: and so it actually happened between the eighth and the fourteenth century. They were, indeed, resisted; but only upon feeling, not upon principle. The passions and self-interest of the civil governors opposed them; but it may be safely asserted that not one of

the antagonists of the church opposed the clergy without remorse; for if the so-called Christian priesthood are what they pretend, they must have an unquestionable claim to enjoy the privileges and power, for which they have always contended.

But putting aside this view, and returning to the principle with which I began:—place a numerous body of men in the position of mental guides to a whole nation, which is the *legal* position of the Church of England: in such a body, ambition of the most injurious kind takes the appearance of virtue. The *duty* of the members of such a clergy coincides with the *love of power*. The opinions, the conduct of all the laity, is *de jure* placed under the superintendence of every clergyman, to a certain extent, and under the control of the whole body, collectively. The conscientious clergyman laments, that the corruption of his times does not allow him the full exercise of his spiritual, and most important, duties; the selfish, covetous, and ambitious cry out against the enemies of the church, as being the enemies of order and morality—the devil's instruments in the perdition of men's souls. Here the most worldly, and the most upright, of the clergy join heart and soul: and the virtue and disinterestedness of the few, become a screen to the grossest selfishness of the rest.

The accounts of the proceedings in support of the Irish Church, are a perpetual illustration of what has been here slightly sketched.

Every church, or body of clergy, as far as its corpo-

rate spirit is allowed to follow its impulse, will be what the worse portion of its members wish it to be; and the best among them will become, mostly without their own fault, a cover to their most mischievous designs, and even a screen to their vices.

Jan. 14, 1836.

Whether miracles were employed by Providence for the establishment of Christianity, is a different question from—Whether a belief that miracles were so employed, is a necessary condition to be a Christian.

The belief in miracles has produced a strange habitual mistake respecting events which, in contrast with miracles, are called natural: people treat such events as if they did not proceed from God. All the benefits of Christianity are looked upon as if they were the effect of chance, unless they were brought about by miracles: God is conceived to be more present, more really interested in producing miracles, than in all the rest of his Providence.

From Professor Norton.

Dear Sir, Boston, Jan. 20, 1836.

It was a great gratification to me to receive from you, yesterday evening, a copy of your last work. I had read it before, and was aware of the very gratifying manner in which you speak of my Statement of Reasons.* The opinion of one so qualified to judge is of great value to me; and

[* "A Statement of Reasons for not believing the Doctrines of the Trinitarians, respecting the person of Christ. By Andrews Norton."]

the pleasure which your praise gave me was particularly enhanced, by its coming from one for whom I had long felt sincere respect and interest. Your Letters from Spain, which I read many years ago, have always seemed to me, from the picture which they give of the effects of the Roman Catholic Faith, and still more from the exhibition of personal character, from the invincible love of truth and right which they discover, to be one of the most remarkable and valuable books in English literature. Similar characteristics, I think, run through all your other writings, (and I believe I am acquainted with all which have been published separately,) especially the last. It is impossible that such works should not do good. Moral truth, when once presented to the world without passion or party spirit, and with no personal aim, moves forward slowly, very slowly, perhaps, but irresistibly. It becomes to men a sort of external and visible conscience, whose admonitions must in time be listened to and respected by all, who would keep at peace with the conscience within.

In speaking of the pleasure which your kind attention has afforded me, I ought not to omit to mention that it was shared by one very dear to me. I received your book while sitting alone, and immediately on Mrs. Norton's return had the satisfaction of showing it to her. Her knowledge of your character, and her feelings of personal interest toward you, are scarcely less, if at all, than mine. We both wish to hear something more definite respecting your present circumstances, and earnestly hope that, among the other sacrifices which you have lately made to truth, you have not been obliged to relinquish those comforts that your want of health must render almost necessaries.

I can hardly imagine a more difficult task more successfully accomplished, than that which you have gone through. There is none to which the lines of Wordsworth are more applicable:

> "The intellectual power, through words and things,
> Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way."

The most important objects with which the mind is familiar are changing their aspects as we move forward, and it requires no common discrimination and judgment to determine their true forms and relations. It is only a strong mind, strong in its powers of reasoning, its love of truth, and its moral sensibility, that can, by its own unassisted efforts, separate the all-important facts of religion from the mass of errors, in which they have been involved in the creeds of Catholics and Protestants. The generality of the German divines have been unable to accomplish this work, and the generality of the English have not attempted it. In this country, or rather in this part of the country, we have made some progress, having had fewer external obstacles to encounter. Of our eminent theologians, Dr. Channing alone enjoys a European reputation, which he well deserves, as one of the most eloquent and powerful writers of the age, always trusting to what is excellent in human nature, by appealing to the highest sentiments and noblest motives. The Rev. Mr. Noyes, with whose name you may not be familiar, is a country clergyman who lately was content, if not rich, upon a salary of £60 a-year, and now has not £200, but who is a very accurate and judicious scholar, and being assisted by some of his friends in the purchase and by the loan of books, has published what I believe to be the best English translations of Job, the Psalms, and one volume of the Prophets, which work he is going to complete.* I think you would read with interest an article by him, in the Christian Examiner, on the supposed prophecies of the Messiah, (being a review of Hengstenberg's work on the same subject,) which appeared somewhat more than a year since. The Rev. Mr. Dewey, now of New York, is an able, animated, and original writer. He visited England a short time since. Professor Palfrey, of the Theological School at Cambridge, is one of our best scholars and authors, a very estimable man.*——

[* It is now complete.]

I do not know, my dear Sir, whether you will feel much interest in these details, but you will gratify me by suggesting any topics of inquiry, or mentioning any thing, by which I may be of service to you. Strong personal attachment may exist without a knowledge of each other's persons; for its essential foundation is sympathy of feeling and similarity of purpose; and, with this belief, I beg you to accept the best regards of Mrs. Norton as well as myself, and to believe me, truly and affectionately,

Your friend and servant,

ANDREWS NORTON.

To Lord Holland.

Liverpool, Feb. 6, 1836.

My dear Lord Holland,

I suppose you have seen the Memoirs of Godoy. When I saw the advertisements I thought of writing a gossipping Article upon them; but now that I have seen the work, I intend to take it up more seriously. I pity the poor man: with all his faults, it must be acknowledged that he has been barbarously treated. I am determined to remove the false impressions which exist about him. He was unquestionably a well-meaning, good-natured man. My only heavy charge against him, was founded on the supposition of his having maltreated Jovellanos; but any one who knew Cavallero, will be now convinced that it was that odious intriguer that caused Jovellanos' sufferings. In justice to the poor Prince of the Peace, will you allow me to mention his having obtained, at your request, the life of an Irishman, condemned to die for having joined in the revolt of Tupac Amaro? If you grant my request, have the goodness to give me the name of the Irishman, which I forget, though I put it down in a Memorandum-book which I have lost, when you allowed me, many years ago, to read your journals, written while travelling the first time in Spain. It would give me pleasure to be allowed to mention the invi-

tation, which you gave to the Prince of the Peace, after the death of the old King and Queen. You perhaps remember that I had the privilege of being your Foreign Secretary upon that occasion. As that hospitable invitation was *exclusively* on account of the pardon granted to a British subject, I cannot help thinking that it is due to all the parties concerned that it should be known. I believe I have been long enough in England, to be able to touch upon that fact without any of the Spanish blundering, which you might find awkward in regard to yourself. Was it in '93 that you were in Spain, the first time?

I continue to like my residence, and have been better, upon the whole, than any where else. I attribute my relief from constant pain to a very strict diet, and a very retired and quiet life. My books are a source of great happiness to me in my solitude.

I hope you are well. How is Lady Holland? My most sincere regards to her.

Believe me, my dear Lord Holland,
Ever your grateful and affectionate friend,
J. Blanco White.

Letter from Lord Holland.

Dear Blanco, Feb. 7, 1836.

Many thanks for your letter. I am glad you have determined to employ yourself in a way, that will amuse and instruct so many persons. You will be able to make an interesting article of it; though I think the book deals in generals and plausibilities, describes nothing simply, or as it happened, and betrays the vanity of the author, without so much of the statesman or man of the world, as one should have expected so long a possession of power to have conferred, even if it did not find it ready made.

It was not an Irishman, but an English gentleman of twenty years old, son of the Chief Justice (still living, I

believe,) in Canada, Mr. Powell. You are at full liberty to relate the anecdote, which is creditable to Judge Powell, Godoy, and Lord Liverpool; and I wish I could lay my hand on Godoy's short, striking, and beautiful letter, of which, however, I will give you, in the course of a few days, the substance. My first impression is, that I should prefer being designated as an English nobleman who had known the Duke of Alcudia in 1793, and afterwards, when Prince of the Peace in 1803 and 1804, to being actually named; and perhaps Mr. P.,* the son of a magistrate who has long held an honourable and distinguished office in our colonies, might be more delicate than the name *at length*, as it is possible, that *the Judge* might not like the record by name, of his son having forfeited his life to the laws. I will write shortly, and as correctly as my memory enables me to do, the whole of the transaction: I am in a hurry, and stupid just now.

Yours,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

To J. S. Mill, Esq.

5, Chesterfield-street, Liverpool,
Feb. 7, 1836.

My dear Sir,

I take the pen under a most distressing attack of my complaint; which, in these paroxysms, always keeps before my mind one of the truest descriptions of your father's book on the Human Mind—that of the sensations in the alimentary canal. How I have been preserved from that derangement of mind, which seems to be the most direct tendency of this dreadful disease, especially when for many years I scarcely had an interval of repose, is to me a subject both of surprise and consolation. I write to you, however, because such an occupation will probably draw my attention from my suffering.

[* See Lord Holland's Letter of March 3.]

Your notes in pencil would draw out a good article even from my tired brain, if age and illness had not exhausted it. But if I recover a little, I will try what I can do. In point of taste, I agree with Kant, who, if I have not misunderstood him, acknowledges that it cannot be subjected to universal principles. Still, when a model is presented, the principle of approbation or disapprobation should be made out by the *reflecting judgment*. I certainly thought that the observations from which my disapprobation of Lamb's style of humour proceeds, were more generally received than your remarks imply. I ought, however, to have remembered that there is a set of very able men, writing constantly as critics, whose principal fund of humour arises from the *roystering*, (I use their own descriptive word,) carousing, eating, and drinking spirits, which they take a pleasure to bring out before the public, with the same kind of satisfaction as a set of half-drunken noblemen and their parasites at Oxford, would feel in showing the world what freedom they can use with it. Their humorous writing is a kind of *Row*. It is unquestionable that much of the *talk* which you find, especially in Blackwood, would be impertinent and coarse in refined company; how then can it be tolerable when addressed to the *public*? I cannot bear Fielding in many parts of his works, though I greatly admire his talent. As for *Gil Blas*, I am a perfect heretic. You have in a few words stated the very ground of my objection: Le Sage's novels are a collection of epigrams upon morals and manners, *made up* for that very purpose. The truth of Nature is to me too sacred to be so handled. I think I must rewrite the article, but whether I succeed or not, I shall not grudge the labour.

I have obtained the Memoirs of Godoy, which I am reading for the purpose of writing upon them. The barbarous treatment which that man has received, excites my indignation. I am aware that the readers of the Review must not have too much of gone-by Spanish politics;

but for the honour of the Review itself, I wish to take the necessary trouble to treat the subject in a manner, that may call up some sympathy for a man whom Europe has not only condemned, but trampled under foot, because a set of people, calling themselves Spanish Patriots, chose to inflict summary punishment on the object of their long-dissembled envy. I have seen Spain licking the dust to flatter him.

I have read your Article in the fourth Number with great pleasure. Your father's observations on Architecture coincide with my own. The triumphal arch at the new palace was an eye-sore to me when I was in London. It is strange that the Architect should not perceive that, unless you stand right before it, the arch throws the whole building out of perspective. The article is written in a masterly style.

I know you will excuse me for what I am going to trouble you about. There is an old German here, a man of sixty-eight, and very infirm, from whom, more for his sake than my own, I take lessons; and as he cannot walk about, I have to call upon him twice a-week. His name is Seelmann. As there is a similarity between our situations, I take great interest in his case. He has put into my hands various translations of *Meissner's Skizzen*: the translations are in good English, but want spirit. The *ornamental* passages are avoided, because the translator had not the power to substitute any thing for what a bare translation would make disagreeable in English. Do you think that these MSS. might be acceptable to some of the *minor* Magazines? Any sum would be better than nothing to this poor man. He does not complain at all of his lot in the world; on the contrary, he has told me he has no debts, but I cannot help feeling for him, since a *Diabetes*, which is carrying him slowly to the grave, will soon prevent his giving lessons, even in his own house. The state of his mind is excellent: he longs for death, but waits for it calmly. I believe he is

a German Jew by birth; but without offering himself to any party as a convert, he quietly attends a Unitarian chapel when he is able to go out.

You see what a deal of twaddle a suffering old man can condense into a sheet of paper, but I am sure you will forgive him.

I cannot help fearing that when I come to Joanna Baillie I shall have to dissent from the established doctrines. It is surprising to me how the public run blindly, in the direction pointed by what they consider the fashion. In most cases, the great mass of the English people seem to imagine they are playing at *The Devil take the Hindmost.*

Yours, ever sincerely,

J. Blanco White.

Feb. 8, 1836.

I wish to bring clearly before me the thoughts that employed me during three hours (from half-past two to half-past five) this morning, while I lay awake in great suffering. Sensations cannot be described; and such people as are so happy as not to be acquainted with the distressing feeling produced by the bowel complaint, which has been upon me for many years, must give me credit for not meaning to exaggerate, when I assure them that the sensation is such as would upset the mind, if it were not relieved at intervals.

I thought on the nature of pain: the circumstance that my mind was forced to *attend* to the morbid sensation, brought to my recollection part of the masterly analysis of sensation which Fichte gives in his *Facts of Consciousness.* In every perception, the

mind is *limited* and *bound* by the sensation, as long as the will to attend exists. That kind of sensation which we call pain compels attention. Is it then this violence done to the will, that produces the irritation and tendency to anger, which, at times, it is so difficult to check? Personality—the *Self*, says Fichte, is simply and essentially WILL. It has the consciousness of its being an originating, independent cause, within a certain domain. This consciousness, as it appears to me, is the means by which we become acquainted with the external world—with all that is *Not-myself*. The beautiful illustration of the expanse of water reflecting the objects on its banks, made this clear to me. Give consciousness, but not a Will, to such a piece of water:—it does not follow that, by perceiving the figures and motions impressed upon it, it would perceive any thing *external* to itself. Give it, besides, a Will,—with the consciousness of independence; and it must conclude that, since those perceptions do not originate in its own act, they must come from something external to it. The Will is therefore a *cause* that knows itself.

Under the denomination of *Not-myself*, I place our own body. We are well aware of the intimate union of our organization with *Self;* but no reflecting man takes his body for himself. This portion of the *Not-myself* has the greatest power over the *Self*, or the Will; and *limits* it by sensations having a charm which overcomes the natural abhorrence of the Will to be fettered and bound, except by its own causa-

tion. But when this charm does not exist, the body is the most merciless tyrant of the *Self*: the idea of suicide occurs very naturally as the means to escape that painful control, when carried to a high degree. The natural provision to check the desire of destroying the body is, that the only means that man has in his power for that purpose, are all (according to impressions not easily overcome) intimately connected with pain—with *bodily suffering*, i. e. the very thing which the *Self* desires to avoid by destruction. This is the *natural* fear of death. In almost every degree of civilization, this fear is strengthened by *religion*.

We have seen that the Self, or Will, cheerfully surrenders its independence to *pleasure*; but it also submits to another control—that of the *Reason*. This is the most remarkable fact of our existence. Whoever accurately examines his Mind, must perceive that the faculty called *Reason*, is not the *Myself*. The voice of Reason is addressed to the *Self*: that *Self* recognizes the propriety of listening to it; yet the *Self* has a power to reject it. The Reason does not, however, act on the *Self* by charms, as is the case with Pleasure: it unquestionably presents *advantages* which, if capable of being addressed through the Imagination, partakes of the charm of *Pleasure*, but how feeble is that charm, compared with *actual* pleasure, or contrasted with pain to be avoided! The right of Reason to guide the Will, is recognized at a very early age in civilized society, under the influence of education; the office of which, in reality, is to

develope this tendency of the human Mind—the RATIONAL mind, so called on account of this primitive and inherent tendency.—Since the perfection of a being must consist in the predominance of its highest or distinguishing quality, the perfection of man must consist, in the habitual and cheerful submission of his Will to his Reason. Since that Reason is not himself, it must be a communication from the Source of his being: it is God within us.

Sacer intra nos Spiritus sedet, malorum, bonorumque nostrorum observator, et custos. Hic prout a nobis tractatus est, ita nos ipse tractat.

In this beautiful passage of Seneca, there is a mechanical distribution of the members of the period which is not obvious, but it is important: *observator* corresponds to *malorum; custos* to *bonorum.*

To J. S. Mill, Esq.

5, Chesterfield-street, Liverpool,
Feb. 14, 1836.

My dear Sir,

I am really uneasy about your health. As I know what it is to be checked in one's exertions, and how painful it is to creep through life in constant discomfort, I cannot but be alarmed for any active young man whose health begins to be unsettled. I hope, however, that your indisposition is not a serious one. Let me know how you get on.

My attack has continued sharply. I had leeches on yesterday; and, though very weak, feel better to-day. You are now to see my recast of the Article on Lamb. I intreat

you not to print it, unless you are quite satisfied with it. I would not, for the world, expose the Review to ridicule by my twaddle. I really feel exhausted in mind and body, and being always very despondent in regard to every thing I write, I am so now more than ever. Do not spare any thing I send. I should be very sorry to appear in print in any but a respectable shape.

> "Solve senescentem mature sanus equum, ne
> Peccet ad extremum ridendus, et ilia ducat."

I thought it better to have done with Lamb before I took up Godoy. I shall lose no time; but I am waiting for some particulars about an Englishman taken in arms in a rebellion in Peru, whose life he granted to Lord Holland. Lord H. has promised me to look over his old journals, and try to find Godoy's letter to him, which he says was excellent. But in the mean time I shall carry on my work, and if the minute information which I wish for should not come, I must content myself with mentioning the fact in general.

Many thanks for your readiness to serve the poor German. I hope, in the course of the week, to be able to send the MSS.

Yours faithfully,
J. Blanco White.

To Professor Norton, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Liverpool, Feb. 25, 1836.

My dear Sir,

I wish I could describe to you, the cheering effect of your kind letter received this day. The retirement in which I live, the depressing sufferings to which I am constantly subject, every circumstance of my present state,—all predispose me to look upon myself as one of those whom Providence destines to fill up the ditch, over which fitter and more fortunate individuals are to pass to conquest and triumph. I have never repined at this lot; I am thankful

that in the service of Truth, which, with that of Mercy, is the only service of God, I am not inclined to choose my part. Still such ideas unnerve the active powers of the mind, and make the exertion of thought fatiguing and painful. In such a state, increased by a severe attack of my complaint, did your letter find me. But when I had read it, and found myself with a friend like yourself, on the other side of the Atlantic, it seemed as if the thoughts to which I had given utterance had returned to me in an unexpected and friendly echo, acquainting me with the fact that, though apparently lost and scattered to the winds in my neighbourhood, they had found a genial nest at a distance, in which they will be cherished till they shall reach the full growth and strength, which it is not in my power to give them.

Many thanks to you, my dear soul-friend; many thanks to Mrs. Norton, and all those who stretch to me their right hand of fellowship, at a period when I have been obliged to tear myself from those, who, though loving me still, would be in danger of finally hating me, if my *presence* shook daily the frail mental grounds, on which they are determined to rest their best hopes. Many thanks again, and again. I shall never see you in this state of existence; but I know you much better than if I had met you in the common intercourse of the world. I am sure that we all belong to a very definite class of minds, and since the ineffable Source of our being has made us alike, He cannot have purposed to separate us.

The external results of my second voluntarily exile (since you express a kind wish to know them), are less painful upon the whole than I had feared. I have just enough of my own to supply my moderate wants; and to the credit of that excellent man, the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Whately, whose house I left, be it said, I am also able to procure books, the only luxury, the want of which I should think grievous. A constant ill health, for more than twenty years, has reduced my strength, so as to make change of place, a thing

out of my power. I walk a little, when the weather permits me; but cannot visit any of the many kind people who have called upon me in this town, and expressed their wish to treat me with true English hospitality. I still preserve some activity of thought; and were it not that the state of this country does not encourage me to write any more upon the subjects that have occupied my mind so long, perhaps I might find something more to say, before I die. I wish I could do something to oppose the source of all the evils which oppress and overwhelm Protestant Christianity, and give encouragement to the spirit of Popery: I mean *Bibliolatry*. I have scattered a few thoughts on this subject in my works. You will find them in "*Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy*," and also in the "*Second Travels of an Irish Gentleman*," an answer to Mr. Thomas Moore, the Poet, which I wrote in a very great hurry, and still under the thraldom of a connection with the Church of England.

The subject which I should recommend to your attention in America, is reduced to this question: Does Christianity impose certain duties in regard to the collection of writings called the Bible? Are the essential and saving duties of a Christian connected with, and dependent on, historical documents,—and the questions of criticism implied in the admission of such a supposition? Could Christianity be ever a universal religion, if it were the religion of a *Book*, like Mahometanism?

I do not mean to deprecate the Bible; but I certainly will not make it my idol, nor, what is the same, my idolatrous oracle.

The accounts which you give me of your literary friends, and their labours, is extremely valuable. You have my most cordial good wishes. Were I, like many old men of my age, not a slave to daily suffering and weakness, I would visit your young and promising country. May heaven prosper it for the general improvement of mankind!

I hope you will, at your leisure, favour me with your

letters. I wish to know the course which opinion takes among you, upon the most important concern of man,—true Religion. There is an immense mass of error to be removed. The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few. We are unfortunately retrograde in this country.

The grossest spirit of Mysticism and Popery has revived at Oxford, not without persecution against those who, though feebly, venture to oppose it.

I beg Mrs. Norton to reckon me among her friends. I repeat my thanks to you, and remain, with sincere esteem and respect,

My dear Sir, yours ever faithfully,

J. Blanco White

Letter from Dr. Channing.

Boston, Feb. 26th, 1836.

My dear Sir,

I received, not long ago, your recent work on Orthodoxy and Heresy, through Mr. Thom, and intended to reply immediately. Whether I did so or not, I cannot distinctly recollect, though I fear my strong intention is confounded in my mind with the act. To make the thing sure, I write now a few lines to thank you for your very acceptable work. I am not a stranger to your writings. Your "Letters on Spain" were very interesting to me: and made me desirous to see everything from your pen. I thank you for your testimony to great truths; for the clear light in which you have placed them; and, above all, for the ardent and all-sacrificing love of truth, which has given so singular a direction to your life. It would give me great delight to be near you, to learn from your own lips the history of your mind, of your doubts, researches, and illuminations, of your joy in reaching a brighter light, and of your trials, obstacles, discouragements, and sufferings. I trust, I cannot doubt, that you find, in your more spiritual and enlarged views of Christianity, in your more filial views of God, abundant

compensations for sufferings. I have wished you would give us, or leave behind you, an auto-biography. With what eagerness should I devour such a work. The progress of every mind is interesting; but how few minds have travelled such a path as yours. On one subject, I should be very glad to have the fruits of your observation. We all feel, that there is an evil to be deplored in the Christian world far more than doctrinal errors; and that is, the *unfaithfulness* of Christians to the light which they have attained. We are sometimes almost tempted to say, that Christianity is but a name, so little is its power felt. I should like to know, among what bodies of Christians there has seemed to you to be the greatest *fidelity* to their *convictions*, be these convictions just or not. I should like to know, what particular views of our religion have seemed to you to take the strongest hold on the human mind; what causes contribute most to the general unfaithfulness, and what seem to you the most effectual means of resisting them. That the great moral purpose of Christianity is so little answered, would be the most painful of all thoughts, had not habit seared us to it.

I enclose a little work which I have recently published on Slavery, the second edition, to which I have made some additions.

I hope to hear better accounts of your health.

Very respectfully, your friend,

WM. E. CHANNING.

Feb. 27th, 1836.

Every Church Establishment is a mighty Joint-Stock Company of error and deception, which invites subscriptions to the common fund, from the largest amount of hypocrisy, to the lowest penny and farthing contribution of acquiescence in what the conscience

does not entirely approve. Yet these last contributors form the true strength of the Establishment.

March 3rd.

The 26th anniversary of my arrival in England. For that blessing I feel, every year, more thankful to Providence.

From Lord Holland.

March 3rd, 1836.

Dear Blanco,

I send you, under another cover, a short narrative of what passed with Godoy about Mr. Powell in 1805, and I have thrown it into a shape that you may use, or vary, as you like best. I have, on reflection, no objection to Mr. Powell's or my name appearing. With respect to the last, I think it better taste, if printed in the form of a letter, that the signature should be the initials, and not my name at length.

What do you think of the impudence of the *Intolerants* at Oxford? I only hope Hampden and his supporters (and among them my friend Shuttleworth) may run stout. I think the friends both of the man and the cause should bestir themselves in provincial papers and publications, to make the nature of the controversy known. Read the correspondence of Archbishop Wake with the Professors of Geneva, printed in the supplement of the English translation of Mosheim, 1782; and read the notes on the article Episcopius in Bayle. You will find matter wherewith to expose the *folly* of exacting particular explications, as well as subscriptions to creeds, and arguments of Grotius (*de veritate Grotius!*) against the injustice of denying the name of Christians to Socinians.

Yours ever,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

From Lord Holland.

London, March 4th, 1836.

My dear Sir,

I rejoice to hear you have thoughts of reviewing the Life of the Prince of the Peace. Your information and recollections must render your criticism of such a work interesting and instructive. You and I have so often conversed on the political character and career of that celebrated Favourite, and on the effects of his power on the fortunes of Spain, and, indeed, on the fate of Europe itself, that I think it possible that the unfavourable view I took of them, and which, on dispassionate reflection, I cannot honestly retract, may give a deeper tinge of severity to your comments than they would otherwise have assumed. It is fair, therefore, to remind you of some more favourable impressions, which my slight intercourse, and unimportant transactions with him, left of his personal character on my mind. His manner, though somewhat indolent, or, as the French term it, *nonchalant*, was graceful and engaging. In spite of his education, which, I presume, was provincial, and not of the best, his language appeared to me elegant and peculiar, and equally exempt from vulgarity and affectation. Indeed, his whole demeanour announced, more than that of any untravelled Spaniard I ever met with, a mixture of dignity and politeness, of propriety and ease, which the early habits of good company are supposed (how truly, I do not pretend to decide) exclusively to confer. He seemed born for a high station; without effort he would have passed in any mixed society for the first man in it. I never, indeed, conversed with him sufficiently to form any judgment of his understanding; our interviews were mere interchanges of civility. But a transaction of no importance to the public, though of great interest to the parties concerned, took place between us, and he not only behaved with great courtesy to me, but showed both humanity and magnanimity.—A young En-

glishman, of the name of Powell, had, before the war between England and Spain, in 1804, engaged either with General Miranda, or some other South American adventurer, in an expedition to liberate the Spanish Colonies. He was taken. By law his life was forfeited; but he was condemned, by a sentence nearly equivalent to capital punishment, to perpetual imprisonment in the unwholesome fortress of Omoa. His father, Chief Justice of Canada, on hearing the sad tidings, hastened to England. Unfortunately, hostilities had recently commenced, under circumstances singularly calculated to exasperate the government and people of Spain. The Chief Justice was, however, determined to try the efficacy of a personal application to alleviate the sufferings of his son by a change of prison: for he despaired of obtaining his release. Having procured passports, he proceeded to Spain, furnished with a letter of introduction to the Prince of the Peace from me, to whom he applied, as recently returned (in the spring of 1805) from thence, and not involved in the angry feelings and discussions which had preceded and followed the rupture between the two countries.

The Prince received him in the Palace at Aranjuez, and immediately on reading the letter and hearing the story, bade the anxious father remain till he had seen the king, and then left the room for that purpose without ceremony or delay. He soon returned with an order duly signed, not for the change of prison, but for the immediate liberation of the young man. Nor was he satisfied with that act of humanity, but he added, with a smile of benevolence, that a Parent who had come so far to render a service to his child, would like to be the bearer of the good intelligence himself, and he accordingly furnished him with a passport, and permission to sail in a Spanish frigate, then preparing to leave Cadiz for the West Indies.

When I saw the Prince of the Peace, ten years afterwards (1815), at Verona, he lamented to me that his situa-

tion would become very precarious if Charles the Fourth were to die. He was desirous of ascertaining if he could, in that case, find an asylum in England. I heard of the event from which he apprehended such consequences in 1821, and I, that very day crossed the House of Lords, and related all the above particulars to Lord Liverpool, ending with a request for a passport for the Prince of the Peace. Lord Liverpool, as might be expected from a man of so kind a nature, was much struck, and even affected by the story; but he remarked, with regret, that an English passport to a foreigner implied an invitation. The Government, he said, was not prepared to *invite* the Prince of the Peace to England, but he authorized, and even urged, me to assure him, that he would be unmolested if he arrived here, and that he should enjoy every protection for his person and property that a foreigner was entitled to. The answer of the Prince of the Peace to my communication of this assurance was concise, and to the following purport:—"He had for several years disposed of the resources of one of the richest kingdoms of the Earth; during that period he had made the fortune of thousands and thousands, but I, a foreigner, and almost a stranger, was the first and only mortal who, since his fall, had ever expressed any sense, or shown any recollection, of any service, great or small, received at his hands. I might judge from this, of the sensation my letter had produced."

I would have sent you the original letter, but, though I am confident that it is not lost, it is to my great mortification mislaid. The above report of it is in substance and brevity correct.—The Prince of the Peace never came to England.

VASSALL HOLLAND.

To Lord Holland.

March 6th, 1836.

My dear Lord Holland,

Many thanks for your interesting account of the affair of Mr. Powell and the Prince of the Peace. I have written to the Editor of the London Review, to whom I had already sent my MS., to return it to me, that I may make the insertion which I owe to your kindness in a proper place and manner. As the time of publication approached, I contented myself with the general notions you had given me; but I am sure that the article has not yet been sent to the printer.

I remember to have heard Lady Holland caution invalids against *boasting*. I had just written to you about the improvement of my health, when a severe attack came upon me, which still keeps me nearly confined to the house, and very unwell altogether. The winds are here very stormy and cold; but I hear the same complaints from Dublin.

I am incessantly haunted by the Oxford persecution against Hampden. A more impudent display of bigotry, and thorough priestly spirit, it is impossible to conceive. There are, as usual, sincere bigots and hypocrites concerned in the case. The most melancholy instances of the former, are two men whom I loved for their talents and good-nature; Pusey, the Professor of Hebrew, and Newman, a Fellow of Oriel. The latter, in particular, was one of the most liberal, well-informed, and kind-hearted men I knew. He had always supported the side favourable to the emancipation of the Catholics, but no sooner did the Duke of Wellington declare that the Bill must pass, than the mind of my friend was darkened with the most intolerant views. He voted against the proposed re-election of Peel for the University; he joined heart and soul with men whom he formerly despised; and is now one of the most forward leaders of persecution. He is a man of great influence with the

most reading young men at Oriel, all of whom he has for the last four or five years gained over to bigotry and Toryism. It was an established doctrine among that set, when I left Oxford, that no Dissenter should be allowed to live within the English dominions, but that an Englishman should, of necessity, be a member of the Church of England. Nothing helped so much to allay the vehement feelings which my individual circumstances had raised in me against the Catholics, as the Protestant Popery which I saw growing up at Oxford. Persecution in a Protestant is infinitely more odious to me than the Inquisition. There is a consistency in the one which may excuse that dangerous error; but the practical contradiction implied in Protestant persecution shows a perverseness of heart which is to me perfectly odious. I was exceedingly fortunate in the combination of events which made me leave Oxford; had I continued there, grief and vexation would have killed me.

I have by this post enclosed two copies of an article which I gave, at the beginning of the year, to an obscure Journal, as a kind of lift. It is on the Debate occasioned by Lord Radnor's motion in favour of the admission of Dissenters into the Universities. One of the copies is for yourself.

My best regards to Lady H. and Allen.

Yours ever faithfully,

J. Blanco White.

No. 22, Upper Stanhope-street, Liverpool,
March 13th, 1836.

After a long absence from chapel, owing to increased ill-health, I have ventured there this morning. Mr. —— preached on Mark x. 17. His explanation of that interesting transaction—leaving the "Why callest thou me good," &c. to the digestion of Trinitarians—was excellent. He analysed the character

of the young man in a very instructive way, and made some very good observations on the manifestation of Christ's own character, conveyed by the mention of his having felt an affection for the person who inquired of him, although, as the event showed it, his virtue was more habit and love of regularity, than the result of principle. What insuperable difficulties fall away upon dismissing the monstrous supposition of the Divinity of Christ, and of the infallibility of the writers in the Bible! Dr. Whately has endeavoured to gloss over the false political economy of the Gospels, and indeed of the New Testament altogether, in regard to alms-giving; but the thing cannot be fairly done. Christ and his apostles thought, that to give away every thing a man possessed was one of the highest acts of virtue. No doctrine whatever is more unquestionably traced by historical tradition to the founders of Christianity than this: and it should be observed that tradition here stands on its strongest grounds. A word misunderstood may alter a speculative doctrine: hence the insufficiency of tradition to prove the genuineness of a metaphysical creed. Not so in regard to practice: here tradition is a strong proof. The first Christians unquestionably attempted something like a community of goods: at all events, the selling property to put the amount into the common fund was believed to be a very virtuous deed; an act of heroic virtue, which was not required of all. Such is the meaning of the remonstrance of Peter to Ananias.

The distinction supported by the Roman Catholics between commands and advice, (*mandata, consilia,*) may be clearly perceived in the primitive records of Christianity. It is impossible to interpret the answer of Christ to the young man, on any supposition that will do away this distinction. Εἰ θέλεις τέλειος εἶναι, κ. τ. λ. (Matt. xix. 21.) On this supposition it was that Monasticism was established, and universally regarded as an institution which carried Christianity to the limits of perfection.—I do not mean that Christ ever thought of leading his disciples to any thing like Monasticism: his notions of virtue were not degraded by such a mistake; his idea of moral perfection was inseparable from social activity. The recommendation he gave to the young man had most reasonable grounds in the circumstances of the times. Mr. —— observed this with powerful effect. I would have added that a similar sacrifice had been deemed necessary by the preachers of moral reform of the school of Pythagoras; and that, just about the period of Christ, Apollonius of Tyana, who unquestionably was a sincere preacher of virtue, though deeply tainted with enthusiasm, and much given to the universal practice of the most benevolent and wise reformers of ancient times—namely, that of drawing attention by means of things apparently miraculous, which they themselves not unfrequently thought to be really so—Apollonius, before he devoted himself to the work of moral and religious reform, gave up his inheritance to his younger brother, and lived

most sparingly on the voluntary contributions of his hearers; exactly as the apostles were commanded to do.

Under the then existing circumstances it was perfectly true, that a man who wished to be perfect had not a more effectual means than that of giving to those whom they wished to improve, the strong proof of sincerity which that renunciation of all worldly wealth conveyed.

To Miss L——.

Liverpool, March 25th, 1836.

My dear Miss L——,

Your kind letter found me yesterday in a cloud of little troubles, which, to me, are exceedingly annoying; but it was a relief, inasmuch as it drew away my attention from smoke, overreaching landlords and landladies, &c., &c., to the praiseworthy efforts which you are constantly making to improve and store your mind. My knowledge of Hebrew is just sufficient to justify me in forming a deliberate opinion in regard to the question about points. I am convinced that any one who has studied the philosophy of language, must feel assured that the Massoretic points represent the pronunciation of Hebrew at *one* period of its living state. The perfect and minute analogies of the whole system exclude the supposition of its being an arbitrary and fanciful method of pronouncing the language. To overlook, therefore, this historical monument of the structure of a very ancient language is perfectly unjustifiable; such neglect argues an indolence scarcely conceivable in a real scholar. I cannot indeed imagine for a moment that such a man as Gesenius, whose knowledge of languages, ancient and modern, is so vast, and whose mind is so philosophical, could be de-

ceived as to the value and genuineness of the points, as a memorial of the Hebrew tongue when living. It is generally men with a tendency to fanciful mysticism, such as Hutchinson and Parkhurst, who delight in the liberty which the absence of the points gives them in the allegorical and symbolical interpretation of the Old Testament, that can give a preference to unpointed Hebrew. I wish that Stuart, who is a strong advocate for the points, had a more enlarged mind; but there is a confused minuteness in his recast of Gesenius's Grammar: a literal translation would have been much better. His superstitious notions about the Old Testament make me dislike even his Chrestomathy. I have made here the acquaintance of a German, now an old and infirm man, who, from his thorough knowledge of Hebrew, and his ignorance of Greek, gives me the idea of his having been brought up as a Jew. He is at present an Unitarian, and attends Mr. Thom's chapel. He is a teacher of German and French. I have urged him to advertise himself as a teacher of Hebrew. He can write it (of course with points), as our good scholars write Latin. His want of strength to come to me, and mine to go regularly to him, prevent my employing him for my own improvement in Hebrew and German.

My health has been much worse of late, and the discomfort and vexation to which I have been exposed for many weeks, have, of course, increased my sufferings. But such is the lot of a solitary man in his old age. I am a very bad man of business, and find myself constantly entrapped by the adepts in roguery, of which there is abundance in all parts of the world, but especially in such places as this.

Yours ever truly,

J. Blanco White.

March 27th, 1836.

A firm belief in a never-ending life after death is demanded as a condition of Christianity. This, and all similar demands of assent to facts beyond experience arise from the supposition, that the first duty of a Christian is implicit assent to the Bible. To what possible sense of the Bible that assent is to be given, is another question: but that the New Testament asserts that every man is to live for ever, is almost universally taken for granted. Were it not for the first supposition—that of a paramount duty to believe the Bible—the rational view of this subject would be, that the revelation (supposing it what people believe it to be) of the immortality of all men is intended as a *motive* to influence the conduct of mankind. To imagine that a good man is to be punished eternally, because he cannot give an unhesitating assent to the announcement of the doctrine of the immortality of all mankind, is totally inconsistent with everything we know of the nature of belief and of moral goodness. *That* man's virtue, on the contrary, would scarcely deserve the name, which should depend on his hopes or fears in regard to a future life. Any one who, convinced that his existence would be terminated by death, should say, "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," were he the most correct man in point of conduct, would be very low indeed in the scale of virtue: a useful man, he might be; a virtuous one, I should reluctantly call him. The claims of conscience to direct

our conduct are incontrovertible, even on the supposition of there being no higher authority. Virtue and Vice would remain exactly what the purest religion considers them, if it could be proved beyond doubt that man is an ephemeral being: future rewards and punishments cannot alter their nature. He who abstains from vicious actions only from fear of eternal punishments, and who is conscious that, were there no future life, he would make *Evil* his *Good*, may be sure that Virtue has no share in his heart. This man, nevertheless, if he firmly believes in a future life, is encouraged by our Divines: while the true lover of Virtue, who follows her for her own sake, who considers her a sufficient reward in the midst of suffering, and independently of what God may have reserved for us after death, this man is told that he labours in vain—that his faithfulness will not only go unrewarded, but that his virtuous disinterestedness shall be punished for ever. This is monstrous.

I myself cannot believe that death shall put an end to my being; I have strong grounds to *hope* that my Maker has happiness in reserve for me; but if that happiness depends upon the certainty of my expectation, I must lose it. But blessed be God! my trust in him is not shaken by any doubt of this kind. My love of his *Goodness* is independent of expected rewards. I am abundantly rewarded when I am conscious of that love; my failures in the pursuit of virtue, my deviations into vice, have been their own

punishment. I am not tempted to complain even when the *possibility* of the cessation of my *personality* occurs to me. I am ready to die, whatever *dying* may be; and I hope to die in full trust of the Power who brought me into this existence.

April 1st. Good Friday.

To the Meeting, at Renshaw-street Chapel, for establishing a Minister for the Poor. Spoke in a state of much exhaustion and suffering.

Letter to Dr. Channing.

April 1st, 1836.

My dear Sir,

It was not till yesterday that I had the truly great gratification of a letter from you. I found the parcel containing your work on SLAVERY on my desk, and having taken it up immediately after reading the letter, I did not retire to sleep till I had read it through. Far be it from me to say what I do not feel, or to exaggerate my sentiments for the sake of pleasing others. But I think it a duty fully to express the effect of any work, upon any important subject, when the result of my reading is a perfect coincidence with the author; and not only a coincidence, but the warmest, most heartfelt approbation. It is due to a writer's sincere endeavours to reach the inmost soul of his fellow-men, for good, to assure him that he has not laboured in vain; that every string of another heart vibrates to the throbs of his own. The subject of Slavery attracted my mind from a very early age, and the interest which I felt for the millions who have suffered, and still suffer, from that monstrous wrong, is not diminished in the evening of my life. You have raised

your voice against it with the greatest power, as well as with the greatest moderation and justice. I thought I heard man's tyranny condemned by a being with all the sympathies, but above the angry and disturbing passions of our nature. Your proclamation of the supremacy of Duty was like a hymn of praise to God, in my ear. I longed to swell it with my feeble voice in the hearing of all mankind.—But I must stop: you might suspect (not knowing me personally) that I am studying my praise of your work. Mr. Thom has heard my language about it this very morning; and he can bear witness that it flows from my heart.

I have written a great part of my Memoirs, which are not to be published till after my death. Few, except men like yourself, will take an interest in them: the irreligious will despise me for most of what I have to state; the dogmatic religionists will conclude that I have ended in something little short of atheism, and will turn away from the history of my mind with horror. That history, however, *shall* be known. I consider it my paramount duty; if I have not lived for the purpose of attesting faithfully the facts of my mental experience, I have lived in vain. But I have better hopes; and the joy with which, at the close of my *mission*, I look at the instances in which God has enabled me to be faithful to it, is a pledge that I am not deceived.

I will pay the most serious attention to your queries. I have found great faithfulness in individuals of the most opposite views as to the points disputed among Christians. But the general result of my observation is, that most of what is called Christianity exists in the *imagination*: it is not a thorough, rational conviction. Wherever that exists, where the intellectual, moral being is penetrated with the great truth of God's Paternity in regard to us, where conscience has become his oracle and his representative, faithfulness is the fruit and result.

I am sorry to hear that you are my brother sufferer. My

health scarcely deserves that name: yet I am better than I have been for the last twenty years. May God give you strength to bear up against bodily infirmity! Your works do not bear the remotest mark of it. May you long continue to struggle against error and vice, with the same success which has hitherto crowned your efforts! Accept my most sincere and brotherly sympathy in every respect.

Yours ever most truly,

J. Blanco White.

To J. S. Mill, Esq.

April 4th, 1836.

My dear Sir,

Having received the London and Westminster this afternoon, I have already read your excellent article on Civilization. Your views are as correct as they are profound and well expressed. The essential defect of education in England is exposed in a masterly manner. Alas! who will listen to you? Look at the state of Oxford; look at the timidity of the persecuted man, at his full admission of the wrong principle, that his duty is to inculcate certain views! It appears to me, that our Review avoids too much a direct collision with the mischievous system of religion, which the State supports. You—the leaders—are too much away from the mass of bigotry and superstition existing in the country, and, as it were, disdain the subject. I am, however, of opinion, that the collateral light, thrown out by the liberal publications, will never be sufficient to dispel any part of that immense darkness which, under the name of religion, affords a skulking place to the most designing enemies of the improvements which civilization calls for, in order to counteract its incidental evils. The Theologians should be routed: the evil they are doing is immense. Has not Orangeism itself as-

sumed the character of a Religious Society? Is not even the Duke of Cumberland orthodox?

I wish to know if you desire to have any thing from me for the sixth Number, and what work you would like me to try my hand upon. I should not dislike a vacation; but I will not desert you, if you wish any assistance on my part.

I hope by this time your health is again fully restored. I have had a good deal of additional suffering in consequence of my new house. I have had to learn experimentally the abominable state of the law in regard to landlord and tenant. I am really alarmed when I consider the power which a dishonest landlord has over a man, who, like myself, enters into the possession of a house without precautionary agreements. But I opened my eyes to the danger after I had put myself into the power of the landlord. I shall hope that he is not a rogue. But as far as I can judge, this town abounds in that sort.

Let me hear from you at your first leisure.

Ever yours truly,

J. Blanco White.

Letter to Miss L——.

22, Upper Stanhope-street, Liverpool,
April 25th, 1836.

My dear Miss L——,

You need not apologise for writing to me: I wish you to write as often as you find it convenient. I should be glad, indeed, if I could assist you in your studies by means of a regular correspondence. This desire is not so perfectly disinterested as might appear at first sight. My solitude presses hard upon me. Yesterday, for instance, finding myself too unwell to venture to chapel, I passed the day in almost absolute incommunication with my fellow-creatures. Except the few words which I had occasion to speak to my housekeeper, I might well say,

> " And now my tongue's use is to me no more
> Than an unstringed viol or a harp;
> Or like a cunning instrument cas'd up."

I tried to write, but as I was writing to no one, I dropped the pen. I read; but as I did it with no particular object, the effect on the mind was like that of dreaming; and when I went early to bed, I scarcely had the power of putting two sentences together. Mr. Thom, who is my only *mental* companion, has been obliged to accompany an intimate friend, who is suffering from a nervous complaint, upon a tour of some weeks. This is a great loss to me. Let me therefore have the satisfaction of knowing that I am exchanging thought with one who takes a pleasure in thinking.

I have been comparing the Introduction of Becker's Grammar in English with his *Schulgrammatik*, and nothing can be more unlike than the two compositions. I cannot, indeed, find any thing exactly corresponding to § 10. You will easily perceive that the subject of the *copula* and *substantive* verb cannot be properly treated in a Grammar, except we settle a very important part of Ideology. I conceive that the notion of abstract existence expressed in the phrase *I am*, is one of the last which arise in the mind. To BE, is for mankind in general to have a *form: Predication* is only the attribution of some already abstracted *form* of existence to some notion. *Activity* is implied in all these predications, as appearing under a *form* which has already become the label, or *sign* of a class. The habit of abstraction enables man at last to separate the activity of existence from all forms, and hence the meaning of the *copula* as a *substantive* verb, a verb expressing the abstraction of existence from all form: a notion which must be entirely *subjective*, and can have no reality. I am so far from lamenting the identity of the *copula* and the verb of existence, that I conceive it to be expressive of the mental fact which I have stated. The frequent absence of the

אֵשׁ or יֵשׁ in Hebrew, appears to me an ellipsis. The character of that language seems to be in agreement with this, leaving the mind to supply the relative notions. It is curious that אֵשׁ signifies *fire*, the most appropriate symbol of activity: a fact which seems to confirm what I have said. To object the numerous cases in which *to be* appears to mean inactivity, is to forget that analogy is very frequently carried so far as to extend to what might be called the *minus* of a notion, i. e. the notion in an opposite sense. Observe a very familiar example in the arrangement of grammatical words, *disjunctive conjunctions*, which appears a contradiction; such is also the case in regard to the *negative copula*.

I perceive that I must write to you on a large sheet of paper whenever there may be a subject of this kind before us. You must not take Becker (especially in English) as a guide, but merely as a *suggester*.

Have you given up Greek? If you still continue that study, I should recommend to you the task of translating a little Grammar written by a German, the title of which made me purchase it. It engages to teach the structure of the language in *two months*. I believe that you might publish the translation with success; I mean that some publisher might undertake an edition, dividing profits with you, and taking upon himself the whole of the expenses. If you wish to try I will send you my copy, which you may keep as long as you please. But do not let me tempt you away from more useful studies, or, at all events, more likely to form and enlarge your mind.

I do not feel settled in my new house, though a pretty one in itself: but on each side I have an empty house at present, and I cannot but fear that they will be occupied by people whom I shall not like for my neighbours. The walls are so thin that every noise is heard as if it was within my own house; and a vulgar family, with a pack of noisy children, would deprive me of all rest. I wish you were occupying one of the two houses, that I might assist you in

your reading. But I shall be glad to do what I can in writing. I should like, however, to know your general plan of study, and the principal end you propose to yourself.

Yours ever truly,
J. Blanco White.

Liverpool, April 27th, 1836.

I went by chance into a French bookseller's shop, this morning, and the sight of Volney's works, complete in eight volumes, tempted me to purchase them. The bookseller, a perfect Frenchman in good humour and talkativeness, opened the volume containing *Les Ruines*, and with that peculiar shake of the head which marks heartfelt approbation—'Ah, (he said,) what a beautiful work! I read it a long time ago, with great pleasure; and I came to the conclusion that . . . . that it was very difficult to come to a conclusion!' How many thousands both of plain and learned men would be found to have arrived at no other conclusion, if they would honestly speak out! But superstitious fear, and worldly considerations, stop the mouth of millions of persons, and this silence enables the deceivers and the deceived to work incalculable mischief, entirely upon the ground and by the support of this acquiescence. Of all the sources of moral evil with which I am acquainted, I cannot think of one whose operation is more extensive than the notion that it is a duty to keep such convictions secret. I can easily understand why the supporters of church establishments,

and those who enjoy dominion over other men's minds by means of theological systems, supposed to be the necessary condition of happiness in a future world, maintain that view. It is equally easy to trace the secret workings, which have brought such Protestant bigots as those of the school of Newman and Pusey to the tacit agreement that, provided the Church of England Clergy are enabled to maintain their dominion over the members of their sect, others shall be welcome to the application of the same principles in favour of the Clergy of the Church of Rome, *out of this country*. But what I cannot well explain, upon any sound moral principle, is the determination of honest men, who have no theological creed, and of upright men, who, having it, are nevertheless aware of the mischiefs produced by the present state of opinion upon religious subjects, to allow things to proceed in this hopeless state. Newman, who has raised himself into a Protestant Pope, and who, as sure as he lives, would persecute to the death if he had the direction of the civil power for a dozen years,—Newman expresses the utmost tenderness for those who, holding any opinions whatever, will only whisper them tremblingly into his ear. This is exactly what the true Protestant PRIESTS of Oxford want. They see the impossibility of universal dominion, and they will content themselves with being allowed to keep a certain portion of mankind to themselves, undisturbed. Now, this tyranny is supported by every man who, being aware of the futility

of their claims, and the emptiness of all the theological creeds on which priestly domination of all kinds is founded, will keep silence, and let the misery and disturbance which such systems perpetuate, spread itself over a large portion of every succeeding generation. Such as are persuaded that religion is only a means of government, have some excuse in my eyes. Their view, in my opinion, is wrong and mischievous, but it is the view of all antiquity, and indeed of the greatest part of the higher ranks, all over the world. But such as reject that notion, such as know and value the substance of Christianity, and hope that it will at some future period extend its blessing to every part of the civilized world, should consider that the progress which that hope supposes, must stand still, as long as the question between all *priesthoods*, i. e. all men who claim a right to settle religious views and opinions for others, and to prevent all disturbance of those opinions among the people whom they treat literally as their *flocks*,—is not fully discussed in the hearing of all men. This tacit acquiescence in the necessity, in order to be a Christian, of coming to some *conclusion*, upon points which for want of proper means cannot be settled—leads a multitude of persons of all classes into the practical notion that, in regard to the religious principle ingrafted in the bosom of every individual of our species, there can be nothing certain. Such men must live *morally*, by chance. Whose is the fault? The fault and blame falls upon the PRIESTS, in the

first place; but there is also a share of it which must be borne by such as will not expose themselves to inconvenience, by helping to unravel the fallacies upon which the priesthood still support their power and influence.

The same day.

Nothing is more common than to hear people who contend for the supremacy of reason, allow that there is a duty of checking reason and keeping it within limits. This sounds very plausible; but it is a fallacy. The source of that fallacy is a confusion between the inquisitive intellect, and the supreme or determining reason. "Human reason, they say, lies within very narrow limits." This is true of the powers of discovery, respecting things not subject to experience. Whether the supreme, the *concluding* Reason has, or not, narrow limits, depends on the extent which we may give to the relative word *narrow*. One thing however is certain: the ultimate Reason of man extends its supremacy, under God, to every thing which can be presented to us for admission or rejection. The things which the human faculties cannot investigate may be said to be infinite; but to receive as true any thing without *a sufficient reason*, is against the highest law of our nature: it is irrational.

From want of attention to this distinction, and under cover of the awe which the name of blasphemy or impiety produces on most minds, the dogmatic

Divines induce thousands to bow to their notions, although they are clearly unproved, and perhaps evidently contradictory. Thus they declaim against the insufferable pride of philosophy, which will bring God himself before the tribunal of human Reason. But this assertion is totally false. Philosophy never was so mad as to call God to judgment: what Philosophy and human Reason demand is, the right to judge the assertions of men, concerning God. The right of Reason to judge whether such reports or assertions are credible, is unquestionable: to deny that right is to deprive man of his rationality.—But here another confusion of thought takes place. "God," it is said, "has made some declarations about himself; which are above human Reason." This proposition is exceedingly inaccurate, and might be rejected at once on that account. Declarations, and revelations above the faculty to which they are supposed to be made, are neither declarations nor revelations. The proposition is exactly like this: God has enlightened human vision with a light which is above its powers: God has shown objects to the human eye which the nature of the eye does not allow it to perceive. The only sense in which such assertions would cease to be contradictory is this: God has given such occasional powers to the human eye that it perceives things which otherwise would be invisible. But let it be observed that in that case the object comes fully under the power of the human eye. If by revelation is meant something analogous to the increase of

power which the Telescope and the Microscope give to the human eye, the objects thus disclosed by revelation cannot be said to be above Reason.—But this is not my answer.—"God has made some declarations about himself which are above human reason." Let it be so: the question here, is not about the things revealed; but about the *fact*, that they have been revealed. Shall it be said that this is beyond the power and jurisdiction of human reason?—Human reason is evidently independent in every individual, from all other individual judgment. Submission is demanded in the name of God—voluntary, real submission; not forced acquiescence: the reasons for submitting must therefore be clear to the power which is called upon to submit.

April 28th, 1836.

My thoughts have been long employed on the mental phenomenon presented by the original Quakers. George Fox, the originator, among Reformers, of that view of Christianity, was an illiterate man; but upright, morally bold, and a deep thinker as far as his mental materials gave him a subject to think upon. A person of this character is almost inevitably exposed to enthusiasm, if he gives himself up to the contemplation of his own mind. No man who has watched the processes within him, can be unacquainted with that spontaneous rising of thoughts which may be properly compared to an internal voice. Like all other distinct thoughts, it addresses us in

words; and the habit of attending to it, increases both the frequency and the distinctness of such addresses. The history of Man is full of testimonies to this fact, as well as to the common tendency of our race to explain it by supernatural agency. A great deal of knowledge is indeed required to check the propensity to attribute all invisible causation to an *individual, conscious* agent. In the case under consideration, this propensity acts with more than usual vigour, owing to the combined consciousness of the distinct verbal suggestion within us, and of our not having originated it by an act of our Will. This is clearly the origin of the notion of Inspiration. The fact of such Inspiration is as unquestionable, as the discovery of its true source is difficult. Whatever is most sublime and useful within the sphere of human knowledge, has been whispered, as it were, to our greatest benefactors, by an invisible agent. The most atrocious acts, on the other hand, have been suggested, with a harrassing assiduity, in a similar manner. Hence the universal consent, attested by language, with which men have given witness, at all times, to the activity of *two Spirits* within them; one good, the other evil; the one, a messenger from God, the other an emissary of Satan—or by whatever other name the personification of evil may be called.—The philosopher and the enthusiast are equally aware of these appearances, these phenomena within them. There is this important difference, however, between these two classes of men. The enthusiast instantly

concludes, like the child and the savage, that he is surrounded by invisible beings who talk to him within his soul, in quite opposite senses: the philosopher, well aware of the insufficiency of such an explanation, and seeing no reason for establishing an essential difference between the origin of the most trifling suggestions, which, independently of our will, are constantly made to the mind, and those which, from their nature and consequences, might well be attributed to the opposite, extreme, sources of good and evil, does not attempt to explain the fact, by the *supposition* of other facts which only would increase the difficulty of the case before him. He knows that the highest gifts and blessings have come to Man in that manner; he is equally sure that the most degrading and atrocious of Man's acts have been equally *inspired*. His observation shows him that there is a constant succession of such involuntary thoughts; and that the wildest vision of a dream, and the suggestion from which the Newtonian theory has grown into its present development, do not present the least mark of difference in *the manner* of their appearance before the mind. Convinced of the impossibility of penetrating farther into the mystery of his own being, he turns to the more useful employment of assisting, by well-regulated experience, that power within, which all men call their Reason, and to which it belongs to choose between these various suggestions, according to the ultimate notion of Good and Evil. This is not the proper place to enter upon the meta-

physical question about the *Moral Sense.* It is enough if we remember that, by whatever name men may call it, there is in every individual a faculty which ultimately decides between Evil and Good.

But to return to the original Quakers: the intimate and comprehensive perception which George Fox obtained of the nature of Christianity, as it was originally published, is surprising. He perceived that Christ had condemned all Priesthoods, and their offices. He was convinced of the absurdity of that middle term which was soon after adopted by the leaders of the Christian communities, that ministry, with a kind of dormant claim to supernatural power—which gradually grew into the most tyrannical priesthood which the world had known; for other priesthoods encroached upon externals alone, whilst the pretended Christian priesthood took possession of the whole mind of man, and governed it with the most unbending sway. The original Quakers alone, among the Protestants, saw into the vanity of all Church pretensions, and the total groundlessness of the supposed Sacraments, of which the clergy still conceive themselves to be the legitimate ministers. But what appears to me still more surprising is George Fox's perception of the error, according to which the Protestants asserted that Christianity stands upon the Bible, as on its basis. Though an illiterate man, he was aware that the authenticity of the various parts of the Bible is supported by *human testimony* alone, a testimony of such a nature that the most orthodox

divines, such as Jones, declare that the settling of the Canon of the New Testament—the most important portion of the Bible—is extremely difficult. In connection with this point, it is true, Fox involved himself in the mystery of personal inspiration, and reduced the authority of the Bible to the authority of the voice within every true believer.

Let us, however, put aside this claim to individual inspiration, and examine its only possible meaning. George Fox and the original Quakers declared that they believed in the inspiration of the Bible, because it agreed with their own inspiration: this, in other words, means that they considered every thing which the voice within them declared to be worthy of being inspired by God, to be really inspired by God.—Now what is the voice within us—the voice, I mean, which passes final judgment—but our Reason? The original Quakers called it *Christ* within the breast, and so forth. But how did they know that it was Christ, and not the Devil, that spoke? They thought they knew it, exactly as I do—from the fact that what they heard within them was worthy of God, or Christ, or the Spirit—for all these denominations are practically synonymous. Every man, in fact, who wishes to do the will of God, as a Christian, forms to himself a notion of God and Christ. Into that notion enters every thing which he considers morally best: and according to that notion he determines whether other notions are to be received, or not, as coming from the ultimate and highest model of truth and

goodness. In what, I ask, does this differ from Reason?

April 30, 1836.

I have read this morning in the Morning Chronicle of yesterday, the paper addressed to the Heads of Houses by Vaughan Thomas, Pusey, Newman, Sewell, and a man whom I do not know, as committee-men of the Corpus Meeting. I do not exaggerate, when I say, that the tone of *tenderness* in which they speak of the victim whom they have marked for as great destruction as it is in their power to inflict, gives me more intolerable pain than any of the sentences of death by the Spanish Inquisition. It is only in this specimen of Protestant persecution, that the true nature of Orthodoxy, supported by Law, can be observed. Here we see a few men, some of them possessing originally a kind and benevolent heart, so perfectly blinded by the fatal delusion of Orthodoxy, that they are satisfied that their own sufferings, in calling for the punishment of Dr. Hampden, are hardly less than those of the persecuted man. But it is their highest duty, they say. They are sure that he is wrong: they themselves cannot possibly be in error.—Why?—They will not answer: they know it, and that is quite sufficient. Can any presumption be equal to this? Is this not pride sublimated to phrenzy? And yet the law which binds Dr. Hampden to teach according to a certain view, exposes him to the merciless fury of these soft-worded

bigots! They venture to appeal to acts of private kindness done to Dr. Hampden, it seems, during this unrelenting attack. If Dr. Hampden has accepted them, his unsuspecting nature alone is to blame. But the refined insolence of such a boast is intolerable. This is exactly like the kindness and indulgence bestowed in foreign countries upon persons already condemned to die: an indulgence which the Inquisition would use in certain cases. The Inquisitors used to show the greatest distress when they delivered the condemned heretic to be burnt. Among these persecutors I pity no one but Newman. Vaughan Thomas is a hardened politician; Pusey is a vain man; Newman's deceiving pride is more deeply seated, and more difficult to be suspected by himself than the sources of the others' practical error.—When will it please Heaven to put an end to all *priesthoods*? There is no peace for civilized mankind, till then!

To Mrs. Lawrence.

April 30, 1836.

My dear Mrs. Lawrence,

Many thanks for the copy of your Poems, with their very valuable additions. I think that if Murray will exert himself, your benevolent object of helping Mrs. Hemans's boy will be easily attained. I have read almost every page of the volume, not excluding the compositions which, as you are aware, are well-known to me from the first edition. I believe I have stated to you my opinion already. This morning the reading of *Anticipation and Reality* gave me

perhaps more pleasure than when I saw it the first time. Its tenderness is exquisite.

The enclosed lines which Mrs. Hemans sent me from Redesdale, will be better preserved by you than by myself, who am constantly at a loss to find my own papers. I beg your acceptance of it. I have just found by chance an old Note Book where I had copied some passages from the Celestina. The following is perfectly charming:—

Tenia unas manos como la nieve, que quando las sacaba de rato en rato, de un guante, parecia que se derramaba azahar por la casa.*

One must have lived in a country with Orange Groves, to perceive the exquisite delicacy of the last image. *Azahar*, which is I believe Arabic, is a word with which a Southern Spaniard associates the most delicate perceptions to which the sight and smell can contribute. To me indeed the word is quite perfumed by the flower.

A pleasant excursion whenever you undertake it is the wish of

Your sincere friend,

J. Blanco White.

To Mrs. Lawrence.

Liverpool, May 3, 1836.

My dear Mrs. Lawrence,

You see how soon I avail myself of your leave to write to you. Most people have a dislike to letter writing, and I confess that I have had a certain portion of that feeling. But I could point out a very effectual remedy against it. Place a human being whose nature forbids his thinking or feeling for himself, in solitude—such solitude of the mind and heart as that in which I am, and, if such a being is not exceedingly awkward in the management of his pen, and

[* "Her hands were as snow,—and as, from time to time, she drew them from her glove, it seemed that a perfume of orange flowers spread itself over the house."]

more so in arranging his words, you will see how he will rejoice in the idea, that what he consigns to a sheet of paper will raise thoughts and feelings congenial to his own, though that result is to take place after a certain time, and at a distance. Such is indeed my case. Day after day passes, in which I only exchange a few words with my housekeeper about the weather, or some household misfortune, such as the breaking of glass, or the water Company delaying the supply of water. My excellent Spanish friend who attracted me to Liverpool, soon left it after my arrival. ———Mr. Thom, for whom I have conceived a strong affection, must pass part of the summer away. He is the only intellectual and heart-companion I have, and when he is absent I am worse than if I were in a desert, for I have only the noises and the annoyances of a not very refined neighbourhood. But observe how selfishness predominates in solitude. I have half filled the paper about myself.

The Spanish lines—

> " Vase al solaz y en él con gozo y risa
> A la vecina encuentra y al pariente—"

will be plain to you when I have explained the meaning of *solaz*. That word, which now means *recreation*, is evidently derived from *Sol*; and *solaz* appears to have literally meant a *sunning* place for the people. In every Spanish town, great or small, there is a spot, a *lounging* place where people spend a considerable part of the day. It is curious that such *rendezvous* at Madrid is called *Puerta del Sol*. There is not even a trace of any *gate* for a considerable distance; and the pretended *Puerta* is an irregular opening which, with a little attention to the lines of the buildings, might have been a Square. The meaning of the lines is—" She repairs to the *lounge*, and there with joy and laughter, she meets a female neighbour, or a relative."——

Sir Walter Scott's mistakes in German and Spanish are amusing. They arise from that indifference to small things

which the confidence of established celebrity generally inspires. It is like the inattention of some great people to propriety in dress. I believe it is in *Ivanhoe*, when wanting a Spanish Motto, meaning *disinherited*, which he might have found in any dictionary, he uses *Desdichado*, or some word still farther from the purpose.

I cannot for a moment compare Drayton's concetto of a Lily for a glove,* with the spreading of the Azahar; and I am sure you do not mean to establish any but a very distant comparison. The image raised by Drayton's expression is extravagant, and distorts the natural object which is alluded to, for the sake of a pleasurable recollection: the Spanish writer gives a perfectly correct description of the effect which the hand drawn out of the glove must have had on the lover. The whiteness and softness of the hand, combined with the diffusion of a perfume, occasioned by taking off a highly-scented glove, (for that was the established fashion, as you well know,) most naturally offered the idea of orange flowers scattered over the house.

Bettine gains upon me every day, and brings about the reverse of her attachment to Goethe. Here the sexagenarian is truly in love with the girl of fourteen. How admirably she touches upon Goethe's vanity respecting Madame de Stael! What a description of the reception of that great personage by Goethe's mother! Aber Du hast mehr Zutrauen in die berümhte Frau, die das grosse Werk geschrieben hat *sur les passions*, von welchen ich nichts weiss!——Ach, da sieht man, dass Du *eitel bist*.

In spite of all Bettine's wildness, her heart shows itself noble and pure. Goethe's letters to her are perfectly dull, and insipid. Could he not find a way to communicate with that beautiful bud of a mind, more worthy of a man of true feeling in the evening of his life? But he was afraid of

* "So white, so soft, so delicate, so smooth,
As if she wore a lily for a glove."
Drayton's Heroic Epistles.

making himself ridiculous if he appeared to answer her love, and wanted that pure warmth of soul which the circumstances required.

Shall you be able to bear all this *Schwätzery* in the midst of London? Remember at all events that you have invited it.

Ever sincerely yours,

J. Blanco White.

To Miss L——.

May 4th, 1836.

My dear Miss L——,

Having considered the contents of your last letter, I am decidedly of opinion that it is not advisable on your part to undertake the translation of the German Greek Grammar which I mentioned. I am convinced that the study of Greek, after absorbing your mind for a long time, would not reward you for your labour. Among the multitudes who have taken a degree in the Universities, there is not one in a hundred who can make any use of Greek, except that of reading the New Testament, and even that, with little discrimination. I am not confident that you will derive much benefit from Hebrew; but the study of that language being very limited, you may in a few years be able to read the only collection of pure Hebrew writings in existence, and silence the silly enthusiasts who derive their mysteries from the fragments of Rabbinical dreams, which have floated down to us with Christian theology. My idea of your future usefulness is directly connected with the study of German. Every possible obstacle is thrown in the way of German philosophy, of which theology is an inseparable branch. You are young and industrious, and by devoting yourself chiefly to the perfect acquisition of that language, you may diffuse a great deal of light over the thinking part of this country. But I perceive that you have undertaken

the study of mental philosophy too soon. The questions which you wish to settle require a great deal of preparation, especially in regard to Logic. The best Logic in English—that of Dr. Whately—is, in my opinion, very incomplete in what is technically called, the first Part. It advocates, on the other hand, very erroneous views; such as that of representing mathematics as a series of identical propositions, expressing in various ways an arbitrary definition which is supposed to be the basis of the whole science. Dr. Whately's book is a most *ingenious* work, which may sharpen the wits; it traces verbal fallacies admirably to their source; but it overlooks the faculties of the mind, even so far as the old Logicians had examined them. I send you in the parcel which carries this letter, a German Logic which I bought lately. I conceive that you cannot employ yourself better than in slowly working out a translation of it. Such labour will advance you in the knowledge of German, and will lay a good foundation of logical principles, on which you may build your philosophical system. But be not in haste to form one; for you will have a great deal to change in the course of your life.

You mention the unhappiness occasioned formerly by the religious notions which had been given you. Are you sure that their root is quite extirpated? This is an important point, in regard to your future peace and usefulness. I have long and attentively examined the source of what may be called *Christian* superstition, i. e. the superstition which grows as a parasitical weed on Christianity, and am convinced that many Unitarians still cherish that weed in their souls. It is the notion that one of the most important duties of a Christian is to look upon the Bible as, some way or other, inspired, and to believe firmly every supernatural event therein contained. The Bible is to the Protestants a true Idol, and they consider the worship of it, as an oracular idol, as the first condition to be a Christian. I need not make protestations of reverence, and allegiance, &c., to the

Bible as most people do, who venture to touch it with the tip of their little finger, in the way of questioning the established opinions. In the New Testament I revere views, and doctrines, worthy of God, and of his greatest instrument of good to mankind, Jesus of Nazareth. But I revere those views, not because they are in that book; but because I find them worthy of reverence. I find mixed up with these views and doctrines, accounts of events which have not sufficient historical proof to recommend them to my mind: and I should be glad to know how a duty can be proved as lying on me to believe such things, as facts. Is it because they are in the Gospels? How then can it be proved that Christ commanded certain historical records, which were to come into existence after him, to be received as oracles? The authenticity of such records is a mere matter of criticism: Can the principal duty of a Christian be that of contenting himself with a certain portion of critical evidence, and asking for no more? How absurd to imagine that a religion intended for all mankind, has its foundation in the authenticity of a number of books, written in the course of many thousand years; an authenticity which depends on the history of the various manuscripts, Hebrew and Greek, while the oldest now in existence cannot be proved to have been copied many centuries ago! Imagine the perplexity of a Missionary in India, for instance, endeavouring to prove this supposed fundamental article to a Brahmin: Conceive another Missionary's puzzle with a Hottentot, or a North American Indian. Oh! but (they tell you) you have only simply to state the history of the Gospel, and many embrace it without any further proof. And are they right (I will ask) in believing matters of history without proof? What advantage will Christianity have in that case over any false religion? If a native of India does a meritorious act in believing the miracles of the Old Testament, without proof, why do you blame him for believing those of the Indian Puranas, which, for him, have an infi-

nitely greater weight of critical authenticity? Christianity must carry its own proof in its reasonableness, in its agreement with the *light within us*, as the original Quakers very properly asserted, though with this clear view of the Gospel they mixed up the most absurd enthusiasm: if not, Christianity must be a gradually decreasing sect. This light of the Conscience is what Christ and the original Apostles called the *Spirit* which was to lead the disciples into all *the truth*. The necessity of believing in *inspiration* and *miracles*, was the contrivance of those early Christians who wished to become *Priests*. A priesthood cannot exist unsupported by *Oracles* of which they are to be exclusive interpreters, and Mysteries, of which they alone are the dispensers. Examine well this important point; else the *supernaturalism* which you imbibed in your childhood, may rise like a spectre to frighten you. Whatever doubts and objections you have, I shall be glad to remove as far as it may be in my power.

Yours ever sincerely,

J. Blanco White.

May 5th, 1836.

For the first time, since my arrival in 1810, I have this morning felt an impulse to quit this country. I regret, at all events, that I left Ireland. I should prefer being in the country of the subdued Catholics, than in that of still powerful Protestant bigots. England is the true seat of bigotry at present. In Italy and Spain it holds the place of dignity and authority; but it is universally scorned; and the representatives of the Church are aware of it: they feel their weakness, and their shame—aye! their shame: few priests do not bear the badges of their office with some sense of *real* degradation, in spite of

external honours. But there is a reality in English bigotry, as keen, as cutting as the north-east wind which blasts the young spring at this moment. The *practical* temper of the nation is seen here most clearly. Every nook and corner of the law is explored, to carry persecution to the utmost extent that the case admits. The worldly priest seeks out the proud mystic, and the jealous, weak-minded, and ambitious man of literary pretensions: they mutually flatter each other; yield to each other, in order to form a powerful coalition, which is to trample under foot a worthy man,* whose knowledge in the same line as theirs, they affect to despise because they envy it. The names of the Corpus Committee at Oxford, compound such a horrible idea in my mind, that I can hardly endure it; it is made up of mental light, rendered, by mixture, so lurid and hellish, that it might be conceived to be of the same kind as that which some divines think was set as a mark on Cain's forehead.—These men will, on this day, about the same hour that I am writing this, leave the Convocation house, triumphant over an excellent, learned, and talented man. They will obtain that triumph in the name of a Church of which, in fact, they are the most formidable enemies; for the theological principles of Newman, which Vaughan Thomas winks at for political purposes, must lead every sensible and consistent man to the Church of Rome. They will pass public censure on a man untried, by any legally-constituted

[* See p. 222.]

tribunal. Upon the ground of this censure, the bigotted and the hypocritical bishops (I am sure there is more than one of the latter description) will carry on their measures to render the appointment of Dr. Hampden, by a Whig Ministry, nugatory: and this, I conceive, will be a precedent for opposing in a similar manner the appointment of any bishop, whom that party of bigots and pharisees may dislike. But I wish, with all my heart, they may be encouraged to precipitate their march, and show what they really are. The country is, at present, almost indifferent to these proceedings; they do not appear to the mass of the thinking people, unattached to the Church, sufficiently practical: i. e. they no not disturb them *individually*. May heaven blind the persecutors sufficiently to commit themselves in a manner that may alarm the people, in proportion to the magnitude of the evil which they now overlook!

May 11th, 1836.

I am most anxious to be useful, but I do not see how. I think of various works; yet I have no sooner written a few pages than the pen drops from my hand: I cannot proceed. I have been writing letters to two of my most *intelligent* correspondents, who, with very few exceptions, are ladies, only to enjoy something like that intercourse of thought of which I am personally deprived. This morning I received two answers. One from Mrs. L——, kind

and lively; lamenting my seclusion from the world, and ending in an expression of surprise that I should have brought upon myself this banishment, for the sake of the *cold* faith of the Unitarians. So much for the hope of making people think aright upon such subjects! An able, and not at all fanatic, woman, to talk of the *coldness* of doctrines, to a man who has been all his life in pursuit of truth! But this trying religious truth by a moral thermometer is very common.

To Miss L——.

May 13th, 1836.

My dear Miss L——,

I am not acquainted with any good German and English Dictionary. I have one in two thick octavos, which has tried my patience every day for the last two years. I conceive that there is no chance of finding any tolerable work of the kind. The compilers of such dictionaries are generally half-educated men, without taste, and seldom well acquainted with both languages. It is quite out of the question to expect anything like scientific words, especially in connection with the mental sciences. Such a task would require a thorough knowledge of those sciences in the compiler; and a truly scientific man must be, indeed, in a desperate case, to be induced to go through such labour. Add to this, that in England the merit of such a dictionary would be scarcely rewarded. Mercantile people who learn German care little about metaphysics, and readers of novels and Faust, get on pretty well with the common dictionaries, and the assistance of the teacher. It will cost you much trouble, but it will certainly be an advantage, to try slowly

the adaptation of the nomenclature, which you will find in Whately's Logic, to the words employed by Kiesewetter. By means of this double examination you will understand the spirit of the science, which cannot be seized by any cursory reading.

It grieves me to find that my letter on the root of superstitious fears in connection with *supernaturalism*, gave you so much uneasiness. But you must deliberately examine your mental courage, and see whether your reliance on the principle that the supreme judgment, in all these matters, belongs to *conscientious Reason*, is so firm that you may venture, with safety to your health and nerves, to pursue the necessary examination, to the last. For this purpose you *have not to read much*. Remember that nothing which requires a learned investigation can be the condition of spiritual safety, under a just and merciful God. Endeavour to possess yourself of the principles which I have established in the work on *Heresy and Orthodoxy*. I am convinced that the power of early prejudice is such, that few of my readers will see the extent of the inferences which inevitably follow from the truths, which I have there proved directly and indirectly from the New Testament itself. You say that you have discarded many of the miracles of the Old Testament; and in doing so you have used an unquestionable right; for where is the command of Christ to *Christians*, to receive the Old Testament as an infallible Oracle? Much less can there be any such command in regard to the New; for neither was it in existence when Christ left the world, nor did he predict that such a book was to be collected. Christianity is not founded upon a book, as is Mahometism. This is a most important fact. This fact was perceived by George Fox, in spite of his enthusiasm; and, in spite of enthusiasm, it was very clearly stated by Barclay, in his Apology for the Quakers, a book which, as far as it *destroys* the theories of all Divines whatever, is of considerable value. Enthusiasm apart, what he and the

primitive Quakers called the *Spirit* is nothing but *Conscience*, or the practical Reason. The Spirit of Christ, they said, is given to every man who seeks for it in his own bosom. What is this but saying, that if every man consults the internal oracle and follows its best dictates, he follows the Spirit of Christ, which is the Spirit of God—i. e. the Good Spirit? Our only clear conception of God, is that of *goodness*. Let people give it whatever name they please, when we follow the best dictates of our Conscience, we follow the Spirit of God, and of Christ. The opposite *Spirit* is called the Devil,—that powerful engine of the enthusiast, and the hypocrite. These two spirits are distinguished by that supreme moral judgment within us, over which there is no other but that of God himself. By this supreme judge within us the Scriptures must be tried, whether what they contain is of God. I do not mean that we could have invented or discovered, or explained so *as to fit it for the mass of mankind*, every thing which Christ taught; but whether we are to receive it or not, as worthy of God, must be decided by our *conscientious Reason*; especially when the doctrines have passed through many *unknown* or *doubtful* vehicles. As to historical facts, whether natural or supernatural,—they are matters of mere human criticism, and cannot have been made necessary to our eternal happiness. The authenticity of the books themselves is only a *probability*, and the difficulties attached to the proof are acknowledged by those who have laboured most to prove it. Could, then, the salvation of mankind depend upon any thing necessarily connected with a thorough conviction of the genuineness of every book, and every portion of each book? Impossible. "I would however" (says Barclay, and I with him) "not be understood, as if hereby I excluded . . the *Scriptures*. . . The question is not, what may be profitable or helpful, but what is absolutely necessary. Many things may contribute to further a work, which yet are not the main thing that

makes the work go on." * But far from this being the view of the English Protestants, they hold the Bible as an Idol, an Oracle which interprets itself, and to which reason is to bow with a blind assent on History, Science, Chronology, Astronomy, &c., &c. This *Bibliolatry* has been inherited from the Puritans. I hope that in trying to assist you, I am not so unfortunate as to add to your trouble. If you find it so, tell me plainly.—When you have made some progress in the translation, I shall be glad to see it, if you wish me to do so. I certainly should find such a translation a difficult task myself.

Ever your affectionate friend,

J. Blanco White.

May 20, 1836.

The paper wafered on the opposite page † is part of the envelope of a pamphlet by Dr. Neander, which I have received this morning through the kindness of the Rev. Dr. Sprague, of Albany, New York. Dr. Sprague saw Dr. Neander at Berlin, in February. He assured me, before I had seen Neander's own lines,‡ that he spoke of me with the greatest affection. In the midst of my troubles, which press with increasing weight upon my mind, the assurance of such a man's esteem, notwithstanding the circumstances which might have impaired it, were he tainted even in the slightest degree with the spirit

[* Apology. Prop. II., sec. 4.]

[† Of his Journal.]

[‡ The words on the paper alluded to, in Neander's handwriting, are these:—"To his dear Friend, the Reverend Blanco White, a token of his undisturbed friendship, love, and spiritual communion. A. Neander.—He shall write as soon as possible, excusing his silence. Feb. 23, 1836." *Vid. sup.* p 145.]

of intolerant orthodoxy, is to me a source of the purest pleasure. I shall write to Neander as soon as I have read his pamphlet. The dark cloud of bigotry which hangs over *English* religion, seems, at times, to threaten the extinction of all devotional feelings in my soul; but such thoroughly Christian charity as that exhibited in the few lines of Neander's address to me, comes like a refreshing shower upon my almost waste and parched heart.

To Mrs. Lawrence.

June 6, 1836.

My dear Mrs. Lawrence,

——— You are not mistaken in the supposition that I am worse than usual. I have been for more than a month in painful suspense about a piece of business, unfortunately in Spain, on which the welfare of my brother (a most worthy man) and his family depends.

The mind has not sufficient power over the body, especially when the constitution is enfeebled by long suffering, to prevent anxiety from increasing an habitual disease. I pass some very miserable nights, owing to noises in the neighbourhood, and in the houses close by me. There is nothing I have missed so much in England, as the solidity and spaciousness of the houses in which I was accustomed to live. People like myself in England, are obliged as it were to live with their neighbours. These pasteboard houses, built perhaps upon a lease of twenty years, are intolerable nuisances; there is no privacy in them.

The *Ricoshombres*, or *Ricoshomes*, of Castille were, as the word expresses, the great proprietors of the country,—proprietors, not so much of land, which for a long time was of little value, especially where the country was open to the

invasions of the Mahometans, as of towns and castles. They formed the class from which the *Grandees* sprung up. In Aragon they were called *Infanzones*; though that class embraced persons of less consequence than that of the *Ricoshombres*.

I am glad you found some interest in my explanation of *Solaz*. That word is a striking illustration of the power of etymology to give beauty and animation to language, in some cases; which, certainly, lowers and debases other words, according to the nature of the original idea. But how various and uncertain are the shades of significations in words of the same family, may be seen by comparing *Solaz*, in the sense of a public place of resort (now antiquated), to the Latin *Solatium*, the English *Solace*, and the Spanish *Solaz*, which has nearly the same power as the latter. Yet all these words are elevated, and almost poetical, because the original idea—the enlivening power of the Sun—can never be vulgarized. But I remember, on the other hand, that when I was beginning to read German, I had great trouble in driving from my mind the vulgarized roots, common to English and German, which came to soil and pollute the finest images in the latter language. Now I have conquered the troublesome association.

Write to me whenever you want a letter in return.

Ever yours truly,

J. Blanco White.

To Miss L——.

Liverpool, June 11th, 1836.

My dear Miss L——,

You would have heard from me sooner, if increased illness and trouble had not unfitted me for letter writing; which, unless the correspondence arise from business which cannot be put off, or from friendly duties which must be performed at a particular time, ought, I think, to be reserved for seasons

when the mind naturally seeks communication. On re-reading, however, your letter of the 21st last, I find that I require no peculiar effort to take up the pen; though my state of health and spirits remains what it has been for nearly six weeks.

Your observations in that letter prove to me that you have of late been thinking regularly, and under an improving method. You see the nature of the difficulties before you more clearly, and definitely, than you used to do; and this is a most important step in the long process of strengthening our mind. Nourished, in our earliest youth, with scarcely any thing but pure prejudice, and alarmed from the very dawn of reason with a superstitious fear of trusting it, our minds become a perfect wilderness, where Imagination and Sentiment have the rule. To reduce these two powers to their proper limits, to oblige them, after a long period of misrule, to acknowledge the supremacy of pure Reason, is what few can attain after a certain age. The difficulty of the process arises, chiefly, from want of courage (I speak of those who wish to be honest) to endure a clear and distinct view of the mental waste within us. Many, it is true, begin the examination, but all, with very few exceptions, give it up as soon as they perceive the multitude of vain phantoms, which they have to exorcise away. This is the feeling which is usually expressed, under the character of fear of *going too far*. I have frequently said (I am wrong in using the word frequently, for there are few who would listen to me on such a subject) that people mistake a *great deal*, for *too much*. Having no standard for judging between established prejudice and truth, they become Reformers from mere humour and caprice; but as soon as they see that the notions which they received from a false education, retreat one after another before the light of Reason, they are shocked at the extent of the clearance, though they never took the least pains to form a distinct notion of the extent of the mass of error which should be cleared away. They are like Columbus's companions, who,

because they had sailed a *great way* towards the West, were sure that they had gone *too far*. I would not, however, advise every one to venture upon the mental voyage of discovery, since it is one of great hazard for any one who undertakes it wantonly, and without sufficient ballast of true humility, which consists, not in despairing of our means and faculties, but in perceiving the limited range which they have in this state of existence, To that extent we should use them fearlessly: but still under the guidance of conscience, assuring ourselves that nothing but the pure love of Truth, which is identical with the love of God, urges us forward. The best proof of our sincerity is, in my opinion, and according to my own experience, a feeling, not of triumph, but of increasing modesty, which, the farther we proceed, the more fully convinces us that our *positive* knowledge of the subjects on which we are engaged must always continue to be very little: that we must finally rest upon that true *faith* which consists in *filial trust* of Him who brought us into this state of existence, and whose paternal benevolence may be clearly perceived by every grateful heart. May He guide you, preserving you from enthusiasm on the one hand, and from mental despondency on the other. Take care of your health, and do not over-fatigue yourself. Patience is the most necessary of virtues for one who *thinks*.

Yours ever sincerely,

J. Blanco White.

To Miss L——.

Liverpool, June 26, 1836.

My dear Miss L——,

Your parcel came to my hands yesterday in the afternoon, and I feel most desirous to thank you for your kindness, as it is shown both in your letter, and through the copy of Ewald's Hebrew Grammar. Late as it was when it arrived, I could not rest till I had read the Preface, and a considerable

number of pages more. I had no idea of the existence of so excellent a work. A mixed sense of delight and melancholy was the effect which the account of the German Universities had upon me. What a glorious day of knowledge is rising there! The masses of dark prejudices which hover over our heads, appear doubly gloomy and oppressive by contrast with the free atmosphere in which the German students are brought up. It is true that their political freedom is not to be compared with that which we enjoy in England; but it is also unquestionable that men brought up under the elevated, the sublime consciousness of mental power, and with such comprehensive views of our common humanity as must be the result of their present mental labours, will not continue long without demanding and obtaining for themselves and their countrymen, every desirable extension of political freedom. A population so highly educated must possess a control of opinion, before which even despotism must bow, and gradually be reduced to what all the most republican theories, if rational, wish to bring down the authority of governments.

It really cheers me in my solitude and constant suffering to hear that my letters are of service to you—that they give you fresh courage, and urge you on in the path of improvement. Since it is so, let me add to my former advice, that you must not look at too great a distance, for that visible improvement which is the natural reward of well-regulated exertion. You should endeavour to comfort yourself with something like the daily wages of virtue. I have derived great support in trying periods, from the habitual impression of being devoted to God's service, under the direction of his voice within me. In such service "the readiness is all;" the *Will* to obey is accepted; and though it may be impossible, at times, not to feel dejected, the unwavering resolve to serve God faithfully to the last, cannot fail to bring frequent returns of the most blessed cheerfulness. In regard to your studies, Goethe's motto implies everything I could wish to recommend

—*Ohne Rast, doch ohne Hast.** Do not stop long to settle such points of Logical Grammar as you mention in your letter: when you have enlarged your knowledge in every direction, by the gentle process of time, reflection, and various reading, those difficulties will disappear. I should wish you not to deprive yourself of the relaxation of historical reading. Without an extensive acquaintance with *Humanity* as it appears in the course of ages, our philosophy must be very imperfect. I also would advise the cultivation of that important faculty called Taste: a quick and deep perception of the *Beautiful* is of the utmost importance, both for our Virtue and our Happiness. I seldom pass a day without awakening that faculty, either by the reading of some beautiful passage in the Classics, or by refreshing my recollection of some excellent modern poetry. I generally close my day with Shakspeare, in whose works, whatever may be the exhaustion of my spirits, I never fail to find something to cheer me.

I have just learnt the death of a very superior man, Mr. Mill, the father of the Editor of the London and Westminster Review. Though severe and almost stiff in the forms of his mind, he was a man of profound observation, and worthy of the name of a philosopher. He was also a man of great virtue and benevolence, though reverend Gentlemen considered him an Atheist. There is no room for more Old Man's Gossip. With ever growing regard,

I am, your affectionate friend,

* J. Blanco White.

To John Stuart Mill, Esq.

Liverpool, June 26th, 1836.

My dear Sir,

The melancholy intelligence which the Morning Chronicle has this day conveyed to me, does not allow me to delay any longer a letter which, for several weeks, I have been intending to write to you. I know how useless, not to say offensive, is the mere ceremony of condolence on such occa-

[* Unhasting—unresting.]

sions as the loss of our best friends, but I doubt not that sincere sympathy, accompanied with deep respect for the object of your mourning, must be far from having the appearance of intrusion in your estimation. I was introduced to your father soon after my arrival in England, and might have had the pleasure and advantage of frequent intercourse with him, if the long and anxious pursuit after the important truths which a most tyrannical and absurd education had made of a most difficult access to me, had not driven me into paths which lay far away from the mental point of view which he had deliberately taken. Yet at whatever distance I may have been from him, I am happy in the consciousness that my respect for his talents, knowledge, and virtues, was always very great indeed. I need not add, that it has been on the increase for a considerable time; and that I reckon myself among the numbers that at this moment are lamenting his loss.

Long have I been wishing to inquire of yourself concerning your health; but mine has been so wretched, that I hardly had spirits enough to take up the pen. I suppose that the Review will be out in a few days; and, as usual, my curiosity and expectation are excited. In your last letter you mentioned to me Schlosser, a German writer, of whom I knew nothing. I have lately been able to procure his History of the Iconoclast Emperors, which I am reading with interest. I see two other works of his mentioned in ——————'s Catalogue; but their prices are so extravagant, and they are so frequently unsupplied with the works they announce, that I have not ventured to send for the books in question. I think I might write a readable article on the volume which I already possess, coupling it with Neander's third volume of his Ecclesiastical History, which treats of the same period. But it will take me a long time to arrange the subject, for it is one of research, which must not appear in the shape of erudition, but only give substance to a few pages fit to be read by mere idlers.

It is a subject of unavailing regret to me, that I have opened my eyes upon the wonderful field of fast-growing German Literature, just when I am about to close them to the whole world of sense. I can now, more than ever before, sympathize with Petrarch, who in his old age witnessed the introduction of Greek Literature in the West, foresaw the glorious effects of that rising light, but sunk into the grave without being able to read Homer in the original. Thank Heaven! I myself have already enjoyed in a great degree the compositions of Schiller and Goethe. I am at present occupied with the second part of Faust, a poem full of splendid passages, which, in spite of my imperfect knowledge of the language, fill me, at times, with perfect delight.

I shall be most happy to hear that you are quite well. Believe me, with true esteem and regard,

Your sincere friend,

J. Blanco White.

Liverpool, July 11th, 1836.

I have this morning completed my 61st year. I will not say, *few* and mournful have been the days of my pilgrimage. Considering the state of my health for so many years, it is quite surprising that I am alive, and that my faculties do not appear to be much impaired. But I have this year often wished for the end of my trial in this life. My *moral* disappointment (as I may call it) has been growing of late. My reason, indeed, tells me, that under the wise government of God, mankind will certainly improve, but the very limited scale of my vision does not allow me to perceive any thing except darkness around me. The general character of this town makes, besides, a

painful impression upon me: I think I see the deep, hideous, marks which the Slave trade, to which it owes its enormous growth, impressed upon its inhabitants. I do not mean that Liverpool is inhabited exclusively by individuals bearing the stamp of selfish worldliness, of that overreaching greediness for wealth, which appears prominent in this town. I myself am acquainted with individuals of the purest and most generous character. But the multitude of equally wretched and daring people which must abound in such a seaport, give it a most repulsive aspect. The violence of party feeling, among the higher ranks, and the large mixture of real, mixed, and pretended enthusiasm, connected with the political Church of this realm, make me shrink more and more from all contact with society. I am, besides, convinced, that nothing I could write could have the least beneficial effect. I feel, therefore, that I have done all that was assigned to me by Providence in the world, and now I must wait for death in this perfect moral solitude—without a single human being near me, to whom I may look up for that help and sympathy which old men that have walked on the beaten paths of life, expect when their dissolution approaches. My only comfort is, that I have been true to my internal light; that I have not betrayed the *cause* of truth. My works (except the last) do not afford me any satisfaction, for they have been generally written under an imperfect light—a light thickly clouded by the large remnants of the enormous mass of religious

prejudices which my education laid upon me. But I leave the result to Providence; such *gropings* as mine, upon record, may be profitable to minds destined to shine in future on the way to improvement. One particular feeling has been growing during the last year in my breast—regret, bitter regret, at having, unintentionally, helped the anti-Irish Party. Not a word, indeed, of what I have published about the tendencies of Catholicism could I alter, without offending historical and philosophical truth. But I was not aware of the circumstances of Ireland; I did not know that the established Protestantism is infinitely more injurious to its moral and political interests than the old errors of Popery. I did not know what kind of tyrants I was assisting by my *true*, but untimely, statements. My eyes have been gradually opened to the bitter wrongs of that country, with which nature and the circumstances of my early years have bound my affections. If the world had less reason to suspect public professions, I would not go to the grave without imploring the forgiveness of Ireland. But I trust there will be some one who will make my sentiments known, when death shall have placed me beyond the reach of malice.

Liverpool, July 12th, 1836.

The subject of Ireland has continued to occupy my mind, and my attention to it has been increased by a correspondence which I have read in the Morning Chronicle this morning. It seems that Mr. O'Sul-

livan and Co. are about to have another meeting at Exeter Hall, and that they have invited Mr. O'Connell to be present at another examination of the Theology of Peter Dens. Mr. O'Connell, as might be expected, has returned a contemptuous answer, which the Protestant bigots will not fail to turn to their own account. This has brought before me several thoughts on the subject of Irish Popery, which have crossed my mind since the time that my residence in Ireland opened my eyes to the real state of things in that Country. I have arrived at the conclusion that, were it not for the Irish Church Establishment, the indirect influence of English civilization would have produced a tacit reformation on Irish Popery. I am indeed fully aware that the Romanist system is incapable of a *real* reform; for its principle—submission to a priesthood—is essentially wrong and mischievous. But had it not been for the constant irritation produced on both the priesthood and laity of Catholic Ireland, by the political ascendancy enjoyed and asserted by a small minority of Protestants, Irish Popery would by this time be but an empty name, for all the efficient intellect of Ireland. It would be such Catholicism as that of Spain and Italy, with this essential advantage, that, being unsupported by the State, there would be nothing to gain by professing it. The language of O'Connell has always shown most clearly that, if Protestantism were not made an engine of oppressive ascendancy in Ireland, scarcely any sensible man

would show the least concern about the abstract doctrines of Rome. With respect to the lower classes, and to the mass of the Irish Catholics, these controversial scenes must have an injurious result: they must attach them more and more to their Church. The Church of England invites the people with a mere fragment of Popery—as wrong in principle as Popery itself, and infinitely less attractive to the popular mind. I saw some weeks ago a quotation from Dr. Jebb, in which he declared that he found more devotion among the Irish peasantry of the Romanist than of the Protestant persuasion. Such must be the case everywhere. That kind of devotion which the above-mentioned bishop wished to see diffused, cannot be promoted among the lower classes by the Protestantism of the Church of England: it requires a degree of enthusiasm, which the dry and lame theory of doctrines preserved in the 39 Articles cannot raise. Hence the want which the English peasantry felt of what the Methodists gave them, at least for a time. The more therefore the English Skeleton is brought out into direct comparison with the well dressed-up image of Popery, the greater will be the aversion of the lower classes to change; the more their abhorrence of the name of Protestant. Popery cannot stand the increase of intellectual light; it must vanish before true knowledge and the effects of civilization; but if *Divines* are set against Divines, those of Rome will surely carry the lower classes along with them.

From Professor Norton.

Cambridge, (N. E.) July 12, 1836.

My dear Sir,

Had I not been prevented by ill health, which has, in a considerable degree, unfitted me for exertion, and by pressing demands upon that portion of my time which it has left at my disposal, I should sooner have had the pleasure of thanking you for your letter. I reciprocate most cordially all your expressions of regard, and assure you that after so long an acquaintance with your character and writings, it is very natural for Mrs. Norton and myself to feel towards you as towards an old friend. I am sure you need not fear that your sacrifices and labours have been in vain. You have planted seed which is already bearing fruit, and will produce more abundantly in the next generation. Your history will be read with deep interest, and will tend to make many feel that they must not palter with truth and duty, but that in pursuing one and obeying the other, the cost is not to be counted.

I have just been looking at the article in the last Edinburgh, on the manifestation of bigotry at Oxford, in the case of Dr. Hampden, to which, I presume, you refer in your letter. I incline to believe that the hostility shown to him will produce good. For some time the policy of the church of England has been to keep quiet, to assume its doctrines as true, without explaining or defending them, to hush up all discussion and elude controversy. Those doctrines, now in their decrepitude, will not bear to be dragged out into broad light, and exposed to the rough handling of opponents. But the circumstances that have occurred at Oxford will tend to fix the view of many upon them with no friendly feeling. When zeal grows so fiery and mischievous, men will be provoked to inquire into the pretended grounds of it. And even as regards that portion of the Church who are the objects of it, the strain which they are obliged to put upon their consciences, in order to profess assent to their creeds, will

be brought into notice; and it will be perceived, how poor a thing it is for a man who undertakes to teach religious truth, to be continually struggling with his reason, lest it should carry him over the prescribed bounds,—and measuring his words, lest they should exceed the limit to which those of his creed may be stretched by some extravagant licence of interpretation.

You ascribe the evils which oppress Christianity to what you call by a happy term, *Bibliolatry*. I was struck by the coincidence of this with what was expressed to me long ago by a highly respectable gentleman, formerly minister to this country from Holland, (Mr. Van Polanin), who from an unbeliever had, through the exercise of his own mind, become a rational Christian. He told me that he thought the doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible was the support of all errors concerning Christianity. It is remarkable how little clearness of conception we find on the subject, and how often the Bible and religion are confounded together, by those who should know better. For myself, in regard to the Old Testament, though I believe the divine origin of the Mosaic dispensation, I regard the Pentateuch as a book full of fables, *compiled* after the captivity: and the other historical books as having no more claim to be divinely inspired than the histories of Eusebius and his successors. In the prophecies, as they are called, there are noble conceptions of religion and duty (considering the times when they were written); but I do not believe that their authors claimed a miraculous power of predicting future events, or were supposed by their contemporaries to possess it. When we come to the New Testament, I put the highest value on the Gospels, as an authentic record of the ministry of Jesus, and regard with strong interest the Epistles of Paul, as exhibiting, in the most striking manner, the workings of a powerful and admirable mind under an all-pervading conviction of the truth of Christianity. But I ascribe the authorship of neither the Gospels nor Epistles to God, and cannot call them in any

sense the Word of God. When you ask whether, "the essential and saving duties of a Christian are connected with, and dependent on, historical documents?" I should answer it by saying, that the being a good man, a truly religious man, may not depend upon a knowledge or belief of the historical documents of our religion; but that the being a Christian does. One becomes a Christian by believing certain facts, historical facts, which have been preserved in certain documents; facts, in my view, of the highest importance, as evincing that God miraculously revealed himself by Christ, and thus affording a support for religious faith (in the highest sense of those words) which nothing beside can furnish.

But I must not pursue these remarks. You mention that there is little encouragement for the publication of your thoughts in England. I should rejoice to be able to turn this circumstance to the benefit of my own country; and wish I had any better channel of communication with the public to propose than the Christian Examiner. But I know that anything which you might furnish for that work would be very thankfully received.

Mrs. Norton joins me in all expressions of interest and respect, and I feel assured that you will continue to regard us both as very truly and affectionately your friends.

I am, my dear sir, yours,
ANDREWS NORTON.

Letter from Dr. Channing.

Boston, July 29, 1836.

My dear Sir,

Your letter of April 1st was very cheering to me. I felt that I had not laboured in vain in my little work on Slavery. My aim was to oppose Slavery on principles, which, if admitted, would inspire resistance to all the wrongs, and reverence for all the rights of human nature. I have no doubt as to the triumph of these principles, and my confidence is founded not on events, on outward progress, so much as on

the power with which they work on my mind. In the response of my own soul to any great unchangeable truth, I hear the voice of universal humanity. I can conceive that my feelings are individual, but not any great convictions of the intellect, or lofty inspirations of the heart. These do not belong to *me*. They are universal. They will live and spread, when the individual who gave some faint utterance to them is gone. This must comfort *you* amidst your trials. In truth, who ought to hope as *you* should? Your experience is a type of the world's history. You have passed in your short life through the stages which centuries are required to accomplish in the case of the race. When I see in an individual mind such transitions from error to large and sustaining views of God and human destiny, I see a pledge of the triumphs of truth in which the struggles of ages are to terminate. By this I do not mean that you or I have attained to much truth. I am speaking of your present mind only in *comparison* with the past. Undoubtedly what you and I call light seems obscurity to higher intelligences, and will seem so to more improved periods of society. But we have gained something through spiritual effort, conflict,—and this is a pledge of greater attainment to ourselves and the race. May our hearts swell with bright anticipations!

I am glad that you are to write the history of your mind. I grieve that I may not see it; but I would not precipitate its publication. How I should delight to talk with you of the doubts, trials, through which you have made your way. I should be glad to know what you think of the probable results of the great efforts now made by Catholicism to regain its lost sceptre. Some of the sects in this country are quite alarmed—and, what is very striking, the greatest alarm is among those who think themselves about as infallible as the Pope. Have they a consciousness, that if men are to choose between different infallibilities, they will be apt to choose the Pope's as the oldest, and sustained by most votes? Have

they a consciousness of laying down the very principles on which Romanism rests, and do they therefore fear that consistency will carry over their converts to the mother church? I have been thinking lately of preparing a few lectures on the *fundamental*, great *idea*, on which each church or sect is built, and of expounding by this the past history and future prospects of each. I form plans however only to see them fail. By much quiet, I feel myself in comfortable health, and am advancing in life, accomplishing hardly any thing which I propose. I do not however repine. I am not needed by God. That I am suffered to do any thing, I owe to his goodness, and that goodness, I trust, is leading me onward wisely, by disappointment, privation, as well as success, to spheres of action beyond all imagination and hope. May you have a still stronger trust. I shall always be happy to hear from you. I will thank you to present my sincere regards to Mr. Martineau and Mr. Thom.

Your sincere friend,

W. E. CHANNING.

To Miss L——.

Liverpool, August 8, 1836.

My dear Miss L——,

As Mr. Thom is going your way, I take this opportunity of sending three small volumes of the amiable and pious Mendelssohn, which I beg you to accept as a little *souvenir* of myself. I think his free translation of Plato's Phædo will be interesting to you. It is close enough to the original to give you a pretty correct idea of the style of one of the most wonderful writers of antiquity, as well as of the character of Socrates, whose moral worth is to me an object of deep veneration. I conceive that a variety of reading in German, will greatly advance you in the knowledge of that beautiful and difficult language.

I return the portion of your translation which you sent

me a considerable time ago. I would have returned it sooner, were it not that both your letter and the marks of difficulty experienced by yourself which I found in the specimen, induced me to think that the task is too dry and laborious, considering the portion of leisure which you can devote to it. But I request you not to be discouraged: all efforts of this kind are useful, though the reward is not perceived at the time. I also wish to advise you never to write on both sides of a MS. which is likely to require corrections. I could not proceed in my suggestions of improvement beyond the first and second page. I always leave either every alternate page in blank, or a margin fully one-half of each page.

I have somewhat relaxed in the study of Ewald, owing to great weakness, and other demands upon my time. But I admire the work more and more as I get on. I understand the principle of grammatical structure on which Ewald proceeds, though it would require a long and undivided attention to become familiar with its application in detail. The philosophical study of language has made prodigious strides in Germany. It may be said to be a new revelation of the nature of the human mind.

I have at present the assistance of a young man, brought up at two Universities and a public school in Germany, who, being a native of Liverpool, has lately returned here. As he went to Germany at the age of eleven, he is more a German than an Englishman. He is clever, and has read a great deal. His name is Migauld, of a French refugee family. I had the pleasure of hearing of you from Mr. W——, whom I saw for a few minutes when he passed through this place on his way to Wales. I understand that you are at present on the Eastern coast, but this parcel will wait for your return. I hope you will derive the greatest benefit from the sea.

Believe me, with sincere esteem,

Ever faithfully yours,

J. Blanco White.

To Mrs. Lawrence.

Liverpool, Sept. 17, 1836.

My dear Mrs. Lawrence,

When I promised, a few days ago, to try if I could get you a copy of the *Conde Lucanor*,* I had quite forgotten

[* The rare book of which the transcript was thus kindly and generously presented to Mrs. Lawrence is one of the most ancient and most interesting in Spanish literature, the work of Don Juan Manuel, grandson of Ferdinand III., (the Saint,) High Steward of the kingdom in the reign of his cousin, Ferdinand IV., and one of the three Regents of Spain during the stormy minority of Alphonso XI. "Don Juan Manuel was born, (says his historian,) according to the in-"scription on his tomb, and on the banners which still hang over it in "the church of the Predicadores in Penafiel, at that same place in the "year of our Lord 1310, and he died in the City of Cordova in 1362."

This not long extended interval of a glorious and active life was marked by a devotion to military pursuits, the most intense, and by an attachment to literary acquirements, the most successful and the most extraordinary, when the rank, situation, and age in which the author lived, are taken into consideration. It appears from a MS. Catalogue preserved in the Royal Library of Madrid, that he wrote upon a variety of subjects; on history, military tactics, ethics, besides being the author of a collection of poems. The only one of his works which has been published, is "El Conde Lucanor," of which a rare and valuable copy was preserved in the library of the late Rev. Stephen Weston, which passed, it is hoped, upon his death, into the possession of the British Institution. It was printed in Seville in 1572. It appears from the documents prefixed to it that no less than three MS. copies, preserved in the archives of three of the most illustrious families in Spain, were consulted and collated to furnish this printed edition: Zurita, the historian of Arragon, furnished one of them.

The particulars of his life are derived from a biographical memoir prefixed to it by his ardent admirer and editor, Gonzalo de Argote y Molina. The Conde Lucanor consists of 49 tales or apologues, rich in historical interest, and delightful for their invention, for the grace and naivête with which they are related, and valuable for the pure and antique Castilian, of which they remain an almost solitary example: they are introduced by a simple and inartificial prologue:—the Count asks counsel from his friend Patronio, who is always ready to afford it,

that I had, twelve years ago, made the following copious extracts from that interesting work. I was in lodgings at Chelsea, not far from Brompton, where a very remarkable person, a Mrs. Howard, lived; an unmarried lady, then about eighty years old, who had collected a most valuable library of Greek, Latin, English, French, Italian, German, and Spanish works. This lady, who at that advanced age preserved her originally strong mental faculties in full vigour, and delighted in the company of persons with whom she might converse upon philosophical and literary subjects, did me the honour to procure my acquaintance—a circumstance from which I derived great pleasure during the two years which preceded my change of residence to Oxford.

Among the curious Spanish books which Mrs. Howard possessed, was a copy of the first edition of the *Conde Lucanor*, which, with many other books, she most liberally al-

enforced by an axiom, or illustrated by an example. In some of these tales it is curious to trace the origin of many that are now familiar to us: in cap. xlv. is the plot of Shakspeare's "Taming of the Shrew." From another, the adventure of Donna Truhena and her jar of honey, La Fontaine has taken his broken "*pot de lait*;" and both have owed their origin probably to the Arabian Anataschar and his overturned glass-basket. In all of these, some particular moral is inculcated, and there is none more amusing than the one which enforces toleration, which relates the holy indignation of the dying and sainted dervise, when it is intimated to him, that our English "Cœur de Lion" is to be his companion in Paradise. The story of the Dean of Santiago and the Magician, which is told with a grace and ease worthy of Cervantes, or of our own Sir Walter, and which exhibits much of their knowledge of the world, and intimate acquaintance with the human heart, appears to have been taken from the Eastern apologue of the Sultan who plunged his head into the vessel of water, so beautifully introduced by Addison into one of the early numbers of his Spectator. This tale from the Conde Lucanor (and perhaps it was impossible to select a more perfect specimen of the author's manner) has been most exquisitely and happily translated by Mr. Blanco White in the 64th number of Campbell's New Monthly Magazine, for 1824.—R. L.]

lowed me to use in my own lodgings.* It happened that, in the spring of 1824, when I had Mrs. Howard's copy of the *Conde Lucanor* with me, my landlord had the whole of the front of the house painted, without giving me notice. I was then in a still worse state of health than I am at present; and the smell of the paint was so intolerable, that I took the resolution of passing about a week at a rather uncomfortable inn, the almost classical Don Saltero. To amuse myself during that absence from my own books I took with me Mrs. H.'s copy of the *Conde Lucanor*, and copied whatever I thought most valuable in that book. I preserved the old orthography, and copied the titles of the chapters which I omitted. By this means I drew up this manuscript, which, for those who love books, not for what they are worth at a sale, but for their contents, is almost as useful as the curious volume from which it was copied.

Without, therefore, withdrawing my promise of writing to Spain for a full copy of the Conde, if it is to be had, I request that you will accept these extracts, unconditionally, and whether the perfect work be obtained or not. As antiquity is apt to give value even to worthless things, I have prefixed this account of the manuscript, in hopes that some three hundred years hence, some future Dr. Dibdin may run it up to about twenty guineas at an auction. I heartily wish that for a considerable portion of that long period it may be in your own hands, to remind you of the friendship and high esteem of,

Yours sincerely,
J. Blanco White.

* Mrs. Howard, at her death, in 1827, left the whole of her valuable library to Mr. Justice Gaselee. She had given to me a copy of the Latin translation of Maimonides, and an old work against Popery, (a thin 4to,) both of which, though of little value in themselves, I keep as a memorial of my excellent friend.

Liverpool, Sept. 19, 1836.

The religious principle, or that internal spontaneous impulse which produces what is called by the comprehensive name of religion, is one and the same in all mankind. In its primitive and most simple form, it is an effort of the mind to remove or soften the sense of *necessity* with which the laws of the visible world oppress it, and to rely for assistance on a principle endowed with *will*, and able to control the blind power of the physical laws. The faculty originally employed in this process is *Imagination*. By means of that most forward and precocious of all man's internal powers, the savage endows any external object whatever with the divine attributes he wants. He installs his *Fetiche*, as the protecting Deity of himself and his family. To this he addresses his prayers, and even his threats. If the natural course of events falls in with his wishes, the faith in his Fetiche increases; if otherwise, he deposes him and takes another. Under all circumstances, he obtains the end towards which he was urged by the *religious principle*; for whilst his imagination dwells upon the idea of protection against inexorable external nature, hope is cherished and fear allayed. Hence the natural charm of prayer, and all the means of propitiation.

An advance in civilization produces the deification of Nature's phenomena, and the world becomes peopled with invisible beings, the belief in whom answers the same purpose—namely, to have some being

capable of being persuaded to assist us. The most capricious and cruel Being which the Imagination can create, provided he is supposed to possess intelligence and will, is less fearful to the human mind, before the full development of its *rationality*, than the unconscious power of unalterable Nature.

The distinguishing character of fully-developed *humanity* is man's reconcilement to the invariable order of the Universe, from a rational persuasion that that Order originates in a power endowed with supreme wisdom. Of all the forms of religion with which we are acquainted, Christianity is that which most decidedly aims at this rectification of the religious principle within us. Under the influence of true Christianity, man acknowledges the invariableness of Nature's laws, and submits to them, under the persuasion that they are not the result of a blind necessity, but of an all-wise and good Being. The true Christian does not relieve his fears of physical evil by the childish resource of urgent prayer that the laws of nature be controlled in his favour, but by a well-grounded resignation to the will of God, expressed in the invariable course of natural events. The true Christian uses no mysterious means of averting evil: that is the character of all false religions; all of which abound more or less in sacrifices, or charms, or peculiar forms of prayer, supposed to have that effect. Christianity, therefore, has no priesthood; for the peculiar office of all priesthoods is to teach, superintend, and administer such pre-

tended means of safety. The true Christian is convinced that God knows better than himself what is good for him; and he seeks for mental repose, not by vain endeavours to bend the will of God to his own, but by habituating his Will to indulge no desires independently of the Divine Will. Of that Will he is informed by the dictates of his conscientious Reason which is a ray of the Supreme Wisdom; by the knowledge of the laws of the external universe, and of the full extent of his legitimate control over those laws, through the scientific modification of the natural laws through each other.

To Miss L——.

Liverpool, October 4th, 1836.

My dear Miss L——,

You will probably be sorry to hear that your letter, which came yesterday to my hands, cast a gloom over my mind. But you ask my opinion of your newly-established Society, and I will give it without reserve. The spirit and the very forms of Methodism have found their way among you. Such meetings never had a healthy effect upon the minds of those who frequent them. The craving of excitement which promotes them is totally morbid, and the state of the sensitive faculties which attends them, cannot lead to any thing useful, and *must*, in various degrees, create habits of an injurious tendency. *Affectation* is totally unavoidable in all such cases. All the members meet in full expectation of *effect*; and if they found themselves as *unmoved* when leaving the room as when they entered it, they would be extremely disappointed. Hence the general desire of deep excitement, which naturally places the mind in the power of the most

excitable, who is naturally the least judicious of those present. Enthusiasm is extremely catching, and particularly so among those whose desires are previously in accordance with the nature of its workings. A more unfavourable state of things to understand the Scriptures, or any thing which requires deliberate and calm consideration, cannot well be conceived. Add to this, that the resolutions which form the basis of your Society are erroneous and contradictory. They suppose a divine appointment of the Scriptures, for purposes directly connected with the attainment of Heaven. If it is meant that they contain views and doctrines favourable to virtue,—not exclusively of other books, this is true; but then they must be considered as appointed by God, in the same way as every thing is appointed by Him which can contribute to the development of the higher part of our Nature. Even on the supposition of *Inspiration*, which the Society excludes, it is impossible to prove that Christ or his Apostles ever conceived that Christianity was to depend on any written documents. If, on the other hand, you give up (as every person who can judge the question dispassionately must) the Inspiration of the Scripture, where can you find the *divine* appointment of those supposed written-means of Salvation? I see you are involved in a maze of words, and misled by deep-seated habits which, if you are consistent, must take you to the feet of the Pope, or, what in my opinion is worse, to those of some self-constituted oracle. Your argument, derived from the word *Our* in the Lord's Prayer, belongs to a system of interpretation which leads directly to absolute puerility. To attempt the deduction of principles from *singulars* and *plurals*, and such minutiæ of grammatical structure, is unworthy of any well-regulated mind. The feeling contained in that sublime address is that of *paternity* among mankind, and that feeling is more likely to pervade the mind in solitude, than in the petty and, by their nature, *exclusive coteries* of any set of *pietists*.

Excuse me, my dear young friend, if in what I have writ-

ten there is anything that can hurt you. Your honest efforts after truth, your early struggles against inherited error, raised a great interest in my breast when I first became acquainted with your circumstances. This interest increased after I knew you personally, as you may infer from my desire of helping your studies; and this feeling of sympathy with your mind is the source of the straightforward language which I use on this occasion. Can Mr. W—— be silent, or is he ignorant of your danger? But I must say no more on this topic.

May God enlighten and direct you.

Ever yours sincerely,

J. Blanco White.

To Miss L——.

Liverpool, Oct. 7th, 1836.

My dear Miss L——,

Though I am suffering under a very severe attack of my habitual complaint, I cannot delay the acknowledging of your very judicious and modest letter. I have no right whatever to speak as by authority. If on certain points, I use decided language, it only expresses a deep-seated conviction, not so much of theoretical truths, as of the experience which I have of certain *evils*. Having gone through almost every modification of the spirit of devotion, except those which bear the stamp of gross extravagance, I must possess a practical knowledge of the artful disguises of superstition, which no natural talent, no powers of thought can give by means of study and meditation. It is the results of that individual experience, and not any new doctrine or theoretical system, which I have thought it a duty of Christian friendship to give you, without disguise. The tone of your last letter convinces me that I have not thrown away my advice. I should not be equally satisfied if you

had instantly acquiesced in my views; for none but very superficial minds, in which nothing takes root, can suddenly cast off the notions of their early education. I am quite satisfied by perceiving that you are alive to the dangers which I pointed out. This is enough; none but a dogmatic tyrant could ask for more. Trusting, however, in your candour, I will repeat my notions in regard to prayer, and the Bible. Prayer, properly speaking—εὐχὴ, is longing, or desire, an act of the heart: to make it an act also of the lips, in regard to God, may be excusable, under certain circumstances; but, like all other externals in religion, has a natural tendency to *formalism*, and superstition. Though Jesus, according to the imperfect accounts of him contained in the three first Gospels—accounts into which the Jewish notions of the compilers have unquestionably found their way—used to pray, it is not said that he called his disciples to hear him. The Lord's Prayer, which is a collection of petitions previously in use among the learned Jews, was in some degree extorted by the apostles, and evidently given in condescension to their carnal minds. The "Worship in Spirit and in Truth" is always degraded by that superstitious fear of want of success in pious undertakings, which is the real source of the regular falling upon the knees at your Dorcas Societies, and your expounding meetings. The heart should *always* beat, as it were, in prayer: not telling God how good and excellent, &c., &c., he is, or how poor and needy, and imperfect we are; but *feeling* constantly these truths: identifying its desires, εὐχαι, with the will of God; *desiring to desire* nothing but to live in Him and for Him. This is what we should *aim* at. I do not say that social *verbal* prayer is wrong; I only remind you that it has a bad tendency, which must be guarded against. The silent social prayer of the Quakers is infinitely better. In regard to the *Bibliolatry* of which you are still far from being free, I have nothing to add besides what I have stated to you in former letters. The Bible is a collection of writings

of very unequal merit: the New Testament contains the purest Spirit of Christianity, but that pure spirit must be drawn from it by means of the Spirit within us. That Spirit (the Conscientious Reason, which is God himself) must make the selection between what is human and what is divine in those books. The notion that those books are the *source* of Christianity, is, in my view, a great and mischievous error: it deserves your serious examination, in total independence of previous habits. But this must be your own work; nor shall I trouble you upon these points unless you particularly ask me. My earnest wish is that you may be preserved from enthusiasm, in order that the honest exertions through which you have escaped from the gross errors of established Orthodoxy may not be finally lost. The Unitarians alone can form a nucleus in this country for a thorough Reformation of Christianity; but for that purpose they must be incessantly on their guard against the early tendencies implanted in their minds: they should remember that a corrupt tree does not bear good fruit; and, acting upon that principle, they should distrust everything which they have received from that stock in the way of inheritance. Believe me, with sincere esteem,

Ever faithfully yours,

J. Blanco White.

Liverpool, Oct. 14th, 1836.

There is a delightful feeling connected with my first freedom from great bodily pain and suffering. It is not a mere animal enjoyment; the delight arises from a peculiar activity of that part of the mind, which may be considered as the source and seat of *Taste*. Scenes of beauty present themselves to me with particular vividness: I feel at the same time my total exclusion from such enjoyment in *reality*;

but this perception gives rise to a gentle regret, which casts an agreeable softness over the *field of my vision.* But broad conceptions of works connected with Taste and Morals are the main objects of these recovering dreams. This morning, just as I came down from my bedroom after a feverish night, and the endurance of two hours of pain which made me faint,—when nothing but the extreme weakness resulting from all this remained for about a half hour, I had a most interesting view of the Life of Cervantes, which I had consented to attempt, but which I fear I shall not be able to accomplish. If it had been possible to execute my conception within that space, I doubt not that the performance would have been a worthy monument to the memory of that singularly amiable and highly-gifted man. The characteristic of the work would have been a tracing of all the beautiful passages of Cervantes' works to the *moral* part of the writer—to that compound of his natural mind and the circumstances of his age and times, which may be properly considered as the true *moral* being in every man. At the moment when I write this—even now after the vision has vanished, and my bodily discomforts rise again, I still keep a clear *idea* of the lesson which the vision contained: and if I should (which I much doubt) be able to set about the work, I think that lesson will not have been in vain.

Letter to Miss L——.

Liverpool, Oct. 30th, 1836.

My dear Miss L——,

Your last letter found me in a state of great suffering. It is now more than two months since I entirely lost that tolerable state of health, which, in exchange for a certain degree of daily pain, allowed me a quiet enjoyment of my mental powers, and some repose from the discomfort of actual indisposition. Feverish attacks have succeeded each other, and the last fortnight I have been perfectly unable to exert myself, except in the difficult task of being patient. To-day I have ventured out for a short walk; but so feeble, so depressed, that I could derive no benefit from the frosty air, and the autumnal repose of the atmosphere. In such a state, you may well suppose I feel no energy of thought, especially in connection with the hopeless subject on which you wish to have my views. I call the question "What is Christianity?" a hopeless subject, because I scarcely ever found any one who was not pre-determined to discover the answer just in the identical direction in which thousands of inquirers have been, in vain, searching after it, since the Reformation. That question may be compared to a long and crooked blind-lane. A crowd enter it, and proceed eagerly till they find themselves stopt by a wall too high to be climbed over; but there they remain, tearing their nails off in various attempts to surmount it, never, on any account, thinking of turning back, and getting out of the lane. The lane is the theory of *verbal* revelation from God, supposed to contain the means of the highest certainty relating to man's future destination in the invisible world. Out of this lane no *thinking* mind will ever find its way. My former letters to you contain the principles that I have been able to discover—not to climb the insuperable wall—but to make my way back out of the narrow and suffocating passage where enthusiasts of all sorts drag and pull you, as

they would tear you to pieces. In the little work on Heresy and Orthodoxy those principles are just indicated; for when I wrote that book, my mind had not yet had sufficient courage to let them develope themselves freely. You will observe that the important question which I think I examined there, more deliberately than any writer with whose works I am acquainted—namely, whether Christianity consists in the admission of a certain number of propositions as infallibly true—is settled without in the least attempting to decline the supposed infallibility of the Bible. This method was absolutely necessary to the success of my design; which was to show, upon the *received grounds of theology*, that every system of Orthodoxy is wrong, because, even upon the hypothesis of verbal inspiration, the founder, and original preachers of the new view of religion published in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, never thought of demanding a mental surrender to any logical conclusions, grounded in the passages of any books whatever. But I *pointed* out besides, that the writings which we have, as from the immediate disciples of Christ, have been *accidentally* preserved, and were not intended, even by the writers, to form a mental and practical code for the disciples of Jesus throughout all ages. That they are *valuable* to all Christians, is true; but that, if it were not for those writings, Christianity could not exist, is false; for it existed for a considerable period without them. What then is Christianity? you ask; deliberately (I fear) adhering still to the old supposition, that it must be some theory of which no man ever thought before Christ. Now, in this state of mind, you will be inevitably bewildered in every pursuit which you may imagine as leading to the answer. You must get out of that narrow lane. Christianity is the renunciation of all *positive* systems of practices and creeds, falsely called *religions*. Christianity was properly expressed by Jesus himself as *liberty*; liberty from dogmas and practices, as means of spiritual safety, i. e. salvation; under the acknowledgment of God as our father,

and of *conscience* as His voice. Thousands of difficulties will occur to you against this view; but as every one of them will have its source in the deep-rooted habits of your mode of thinking, no one can be able to solve them for you. The laborious and painful task must be performed by yourself.

Yours ever sincerely,
J. Blanco White.

To Miss L——.

Liverpool, Dec. 13th, 1836.

My dear Miss L——,

The continual sense of weakness which I have now, when I am not in pain, deprives me of all animation and spirit when I wish to write upon the important subject of religious inquiry. Though I am strong in faith and hope in regard to the moral improvement of our portion of mankind, the darkness of the present moment, especially in England, combined with the dejection natural to a sickly and solitary old man, occasions a prostration of the mental faculties which allows me only to receive the thoughts of others, but makes me averse from the exertion of bringing out my own. In regard, however, to the view of conformity with the Will of God which you seem to have adopted with the clearness of conviction, all I am able to say is reduced to a piece of practical advice. Be on your guard against the fear of its being *too simple*. The notion of religion given to Christians of all denominations, by their parents, and their priests, is so complicated, that to adopt such a simple view as the one I recommend, requires a most painful effort. *Devotion*, in particular, appears inconceivable in the absence of *ascetic* practices, both external and internal. People either want incomprehensible and contradictory articles of faith, to which they may bend a reluctant understanding; or they wish for regular forms of piety which may attest the desire of reli-

gious improvement, and act upon the imagination as tangible pledges between God and ourselves: a *covenant* with external and visible conditions is required, in some shape or other, by all who wish to have a *particular* ground of security for their souls. Such is the selfish, and, really, interested religion, to which we are accustomed from our earliest youth. When, therefore, having found the unsoundness of all such grounds of spiritual safety, we are, step by step, led to the only true communication with God of which Man is capable, by means of the light within us, and arrive at the conclusion that to *will* and do, as much as it may be in our power, what that light, undisturbed by selfishness, shows us as *best*, and consequently as identical with the Will of Him who is supremely good, we are apt to fear that we have renounced all religion, and that we are trusting our eternal happiness on things without shape or form. And so it is, if we take the word religion in its common acceptation; and so it is unquestionably in regard to the loss of every thing that can affect the imagination. Our religion is perfectly spiritual, i. e. it does not address itself to the lower but the higher faculties of the soul: our faith reposes not on *covenants* supposed to be made *in time*, but on that which, arising from the derivation of our distinguishing faculty—*conscientious reason*—from the eternal source of our being, must be as eternal as Himself. As to the supposed want of religious occupation, such an objection cannot come from any one who understands the meaning of conformity with the will of God; for any one who obtains a glimpse of the true meaning of those words, must instantly perceive that the whole existence of a human being who sincerely endeavours to adopt that rule, must be an uninterrupted act of piety. Add to this, the activity of research which it implies, and the self-control which it demands, and tell me whether a worthier view of our relation to an intelligent moral Creator can be conceived. To ask by what *rule* we are to be guided, is the same as to ask by what rule we are to use our eyes. All

that we have to do is to be on our guard against *selfishness*, and to decide against our *tendencies* in case of doubt. *Error*, under such moral determination, cannot do any substantial harm.

I am glad that you begin to perceive the high moral worth of Socrates. In estimating his intellectual qualities, you must not forget that he wanted most of the external advantages of positive knowledge derived from accumulated observation, which even a well-educated child enjoys among us.

Believe me ever sincerely yours,

J. Blanco White.

Dec. 18, 1836.

Religion is an habitual aspiration to the eternal source of, what we call, the intellectual and moral part of our being. That aspiring implies, of course, love and reverence, and, consequently, cultivation of that best part of ourselves. In this respect individuals are extremely different; but in their ignorance of the *object* which the religious man wishes to find and approach, they are all equal. No man can possibly know any thing of God except what he finds in himself.

I have been reading the remarkable work of Strauss, *Leben Jesu*. My last printed works, as well as my manuscript Notes, show that I have long been convinced that Christianity does not depend on the authority of Books. I had lately advanced farther: I was persuaded that the account which we have of Jesus of Nazareth was made up of the real events of

his life, and of the *Messianish* expectations of a numerous Jewish religious party, which seems to have existed since the time of the Maccabees. When this party (which seems, indeed, to have been the most moral portion of a horribly perverted nation) became convinced that Jesus had the marks (the *signs*) of the Messiah, especially when their feelings became highly engaged in his support, in consequence of the barbarous and most unjust death to which he was doomed by the bigotry of the Priests and Pharisees, the believers in the Messiahship of Jesus must have been extremely disposed to find in him, what they had expected in consequence of their misinterpretation of the Old Testament. Whoever believes in Prophecy is under a *religious* duty of finding it realized as history, at some time or other. Reports about Jesus would circulate, and if they agreed with the supposed prophecies, no *Messianite* would hesitate a moment to receive them as facts. In this manner were the Gospels compiled. They contain an original *moral and intellectual* sketch of the individual Jesus, which the right moral feeling of every man may recognize, and fill up. This is the only *historical* element of Christianity.

CHAPTER VII.

EXTRACTS FROM JOURNALS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

1837.—Ætat. 62.

Liverpool, Jan. 18th, 1837.

I AM just returned from seeing the Rev. Mr. Perry—a Unitarian Minister, who, living near me, had called three or four times upon me—laid in his grave. This is the only funeral which I have attended, on purpose, during my long residence in England. But, I knew there would be very few at the funeral, and wished to show this mark of respect to the deceased, as well as to my new religious connection. The more I know of that small body of people, the greater is my regard for them. There were but three members of our society present; Mr. Martineau, who officiated; Mr. Thom and Mr. Archer, as mourners; to these I made a fourth, in the character of a sympathising friend. *Sunt lachrymæ rerum*,—and I could not prevent one from rolling down when the coffin was let down. There is, indeed, much of my sensibility which is nervous; yet a mind so stored with baffled affections and regrets, as mine, may be excused for its weakness. My efforts to suppress external marks of feeling are indeed very great, but not equal to the in-

tended object. My tear, however, was not for Mr. Perry personally, with whom I was not at all intimate; it was for *humanity*—suffering, struggling, aspiring, and daily perishing and renewed, humanity. As to the grave, and the descent of the coffin, and the strange noise of the sliding ropes—those things raise no melancholy feelings within me. I know not how soon I shall be laid in that same ground—for I have desired in my Will to be buried in Renshaw Street Chapel—and the thought of my last home came vividly before me. No: it is not death that moves me; but the contemplation of the rough path, and the darkened mental atmosphere, which the human passions, and interests, disguised as Religion, oblige us to tread and cross, on our way to the grave. What uncharitable, nay, what barbarous feelings, under the name of *Religious* fears, would the view of the good and, I believe, long-tried man whom we committed to the ground, have raised in the bosom of many otherwise kind-hearted persons I know! How they would have shrunk from the excellent men—and I am not acquainted with three more worthy souls—who, having for a long period administered consolation to the deceased, now paid him the last offices of humanity! What a shock would my presence have given to a multitude of Orthodox persons who, but for my secession from the Church, would proclaim themselves my attached friends!

Is there no hope that the notion of Orthodoxy—

that most deadly moral poison—shall be well subdued—if not totally conquered in this country? The thought whether I should again take the pen against that monstrous evil, keeps me in continual uneasiness. The hopelessness of such a task, at present, makes me quite shrink from it. The love of information—of which I have found an inexhaustible mine in the German language—attracts me almost irresistibly to the works which I see already on my shelves, and those whose valuable contents I know by report. If I open the treasures of Literature which nourished my mind in youth—especially the Italian Poets—I feel young again, and my mind feels transported to the region of love and beauty, which I can now better enjoy than during the fever of the passions. I am reading Tasso, after more than thirty years of neglect, with a far higher perception of the immortal beauties of his great poem, than I ever had in the period of my æsthetic self-instruction. How can I quit this Elysium of the mind, to plunge into the Stygian floods of controversy! And yet I cannot quiet myself upon the point of duty. Could I but perceive one single spot of solid ground for hope of future usefulness, I would instantly engage again in the thorny path of theology. Oh, that I might hope that any thing I have said or done would contribute to the extinction of that delusive, and most mischievous phantom! But when I look about me, and perceive that even many of my brother-Unitarians would shrink from what I have to tell

them, I find that my mind will hardly guide my pen upon such subjects. If I write upon Christianity, it will certainly be under the encouragement which the Liverpool Unitarians give me by their high moral character, and their love of truth. I look upon the English Unitarians as the nucleus of an extensive Society of *reasonable* Christians, which shall stand, in this country, between the two extremes of Fanaticism and Atheism, checking the evils of both, and attracting individuals from both parties, to that habitual trust in, and love of God, which, independently from all dogmas concerning his *objective* nature, is the only religion fitted for mankind in its mental and moral maturity.—I wish, with all my heart, I could bestow still another mite towards that glorious *consummation.*

To Miss L——.

Liverpool, Jan. 6, 1837.

My dear Miss L——,

My copy of Paulus's Life of Christ has been in the hands of two friends for a long time. Mr. Thom has it now; and if, when he has finished the first volume, you should be inclined to read it, I will send it to you. But though there are excellent things in that work, the attempt to account for the *narratives* of the miracles by natural events, modified to the perception of the narrators by the ignorance and prejudices of their age and condition, is, upon the whole, totally unsatisfactory. The other work to which you allude is *Strauss's Leben Jesu.* It is a performance of great ability and knowledge. The author, as you have heard, proves the unsatisfactory nature of the explanations given both by

the believers in supernaturalism, and by *Paulus*, as the best representative of the *Rationalists*. His conclusion is, that the Gospels are not the writing of personal witnesses; but of Christians who received the accounts of Jesus's life at second or third hand, and mixed them up with their previous notions of what the Messiah must have been, and what must have been the events of his life, according to the interpretations of several passages of the Old Testament, which had been for a long time current among the Jews. There is no copy to be had of this work at present, among the booksellers. A second edition is preparing in Germany. I have read the work, and if you follow my advice, you will not attempt reading it till you understand German with ease. I believe besides that it would not give you much light, in regard to the difficulties with which you have to contend at present. I would advise you to suspend your judgment, and furnish your mind with collateral information—especially history, and as much philosophy as you can obtain by means of the books within your reach, and your own reflection.

I do not believe there is any more difference between *Reason* and *Reasoning*, than between *Love* and *Loving*. Such verbal distinctions will never throw light on the great questions concerning our mind. If, for the sake of arrangement and nomenclature, we agree to call the primitive grounds of all knowledge, the laws of our minds—*Reason*, and their application through successive inferences, *Reasoning*; well and good. But we must not suppose that there are two faculties in us, corresponding to those names. Is the Trinity (you ask) against Reason, or against *Reasoning*? Where is the *Trinity* to which your question applies? Is it a *phenomenon*? or is it not a *notion*, formed upon the supposed meaning of certain books? If that notion is *contradictory*, i. e. asserts in some terms, what it denies in others—then the *notion* of the Trinity is against *Reason*, or, in other words, against the primitive laws of our intellectual nature.

Conscientious Reason is a verbal form which I have proposed, in order to embrace the notion of *practical* as well as *speculative Reason*. It explains nothing; but it may be a means of avoiding *theological evasions*, in regard to the duty of using our Reason, i. e. *reasoning* conscientiously and under the sense of responsibility.

I feel a little better than I have been for some time past; but I am fatigued by the least exertion.

Yours ever sincerely,

J. Blanco White.

(*After rising from a severe attack of illness.*)

Feb. 2.

I believe in, trust in, love, worship and obey One God, who reveals himself to Mankind through his Spirit of benevolence, justice, and mercy, as it appears to us in the form of that internal voice, generally called *Conscience*, the ground of which is *Reason*. I am convinced that this is the essence of true Christianity: nothing, in the shape of *critical* history, i. e. of historical certainty founded on *critical* judgment respecting written documents, can be necessarily connected with the *only true* religion, namely, that which is suited to the whole of mankind.

J. B. W.

Feb. 3.

Still very, very ill. While putting on a few clothes and washing, I fainted with fatigue. Read,—five minutes at a time,—Viardot's Life of Cervantes.

The moral picture of Jesus of Nazareth, which may be drawn from the Gospels, is, in spite of their

greatly corrupted historical character, the most fit vehicle for popular instruction, which, I believe, was ever known; but the original picture must be *restored,* as artists of genius restore an ancient statue, by means of its incomplete fragments. The work here is not difficult, provided the *love* of the miraculous does not disturb the moral sense: the fragments, for the most part, breathe the *spirit* of the whole. The image thus conceived by minds of *congenial spirit,* is the only *Christ* we can possibly know.

Feb. 10th, 1837.

Just perceiving some relief; but extremely weak.

I have past the last five or six days on my sofa, sitting up, now and then, to read for about five minutes, and lying down again exhausted. My head has been so much affected by this disease, that I could not give attention to any serious subject. Fortunately my friend Don Antonio de Zulueta sent me the recent Paris edition of Gil Blas, that I might amuse myself by looking at the numerous vignettes with which it is embellished.

I had made an attempt many years ago to read Gil Blas a second time, in order to form a well-grounded opinion of its merits; for I have never considered it as a work worthy of the reputation it enjoys; but I was soon tired by the never-ending string of stories, which are brought from every corner of the domains of invention, to swell up the history of a worthless rogue. I have this time surmounted

my reluctance: and my final judgment is this. The whole merit of the Romance in question consists in the smoothness of the narrative; and that kind of ingenuity which, by a certain disregard of probability, can turn common life into a source of adventures, interesting to idle curiosity, especially that of the young. But I declare that, in a moral point of view, it is impossible to read anything more revolting, more palsying to the soul. There is not one trait of disinterested virtue in the whole of the work. Tom Jones is not a flattering representation of life; but how full it is of invigorating pictures of the noble qualities with which nature endows many a heart. In Gil Blas, mankind, without exception, consists of odious reptiles; another Mosaic Deluge, but with no Ark, would be the fittest end for them: nothing else can satisfy the mind when wishing to free the earth from such a disgusting tribe of reptiles. Moses must have read Gil Blas prophetically before he described his *Cataclysmos*.

The Spaniards need not be jealous of *Gil Blas*. In my opinion Le Sage must have made use of a large collection of detached Spanish *Novelas*, which abounded in manuscript from the time of Philip II. to that of the Bourbons. But the talent with which the materials are managed is entirely his own. The most obvious proof of this conjecture arises from the frequent mangling of Spanish names. Le Sage must have been often puzzled by the Spanish hand, in words which are either formed according to no gene-

ral analogy, or express such allusions as must escape a foreigner—especially one who (as it is ascertained) had never been in the country. I cannot guess, for instance, what word he distorted into *La Cosclina*, the name he gives to the gypsy, the mother of *Scipion*; but any Spaniard will instantly perceive that the combination of s, c, l, is repugnant to his language. There are numerous instances of this kind.

Le Sage's mind might have for its symbol a snake, agile, flexible, smooth, and cold, with a great readiness to use its sharp teeth. He had no sense of beauty whatever—either physical or moral. There is not a description of scenery in the whole work: his female beauties are slightly described, and just so far as to be made *appetissantes*. Virtue, to him, is as an *accident* arising from circumstances; and he is anxious to caution his readers that it is a most dangerous and, after all, a most useless thing, in the world. The moral of the whole work is—*Be a clever villain.*

I shall carry a thorough hatred of *Gil Blas* to my grave.

February 19th, 1837.

I have finished to-day *Fichte's Thatsachen des Bewusstseyns*, into which I had looked at different times. I have now read it connectedly from beginning to end. It is a book of immense difficulty; yet in spite of the many passages which I could not

thoroughly understand, I have felt the greatest interest during the perusal. My greatest pleasure was derived from the last part, where Fichte developes the moral view as the highest point of his philosophical system. People who cannot conceive religion apart from *authority*, imagine that every one whose reason rejects that ground, must remain in a state of insensibility towards the final object of true religion —God. They cannot conceive the deep religious sense which such a book as that of Fichte can produce in some souls, independently of the truth of the whole as a system. With respect to myself, such is the longing after the eternal source of my mind which habitually possesses my soul, that even a detached observation, in a philosophical book, which imparts a clear glimpse of divine truth, quite enraptures my whole being. But why do I not feel the same, when I attempt to rise to God according to the theological method? The answer is plain: because I am convinced that I attempt to rise upon a false foundation. Upon that ground God becomes to me a mere *Idol*.*

February 24th.

I have just read, for the third or fourth time, Bishop Butler's Sermons on Human Nature, and

* During the period of my efforts to become *evangelical*, I used to force myself to read such books as Doddridge's Rise and Progress, the Whole Duty of Man, *evangelized* by Mr. Venn, &c. &c. After having regularly nauseated myself every day, *secundum artem*, if I happened to light upon any philosophical observations on God and virtue, I was frequently affected to tears.—Liverpool, August 21, 1839.

their value has increased in my judgment. Butler's Analogy is an inferior work: the argument of Analogy, especially when applied to the Christianity of Churches, is totally unsatisfactory. But in regard to the great principle upon which the true theory of morals is founded, Bishop Butler attained and expressed a perfectly clear view. The starting point, the first ground of all that man can know concerning himself as he is *Man,* is his own *Rationality.* This may be unquestionably established by self-observation: when once truly and clearly recognized, all the mental concerns of mankind may be said to be settled. Is there *Rationality* in the world? Then we may be sure that it has the supremacy over all that is not *Rational.* The *rational* man (in other words, the *conscientious* man,) is identified with the Ruler of the Universe.

February 28th.

According to the constitution of our minds, the knowledge which we have of ourselves and of the external world leads us, with absolute necessity, to conclude that if the World was created by the free act of a conscious Being, that Being must either be limited in *power* or in *goodness.* Out of this dilemma neither philosophy nor theology can extricate the thinking and unsuperstitious mind. What, then, is to be done? Man must turn to the light within him —the highest, the purest, the best guide he knows. He must follow that light; he must sacrifice his

selfish Will to the duties which Conscience points out, and, forgetting the dark mystery of his existence, use that existence so, that, if it depended upon him exclusively, the universe would be free from evil. Any conduct but this is madness.

March 3rd.

The twenty-seventh anniversary of my arrival in England, for which I still continue thankful to Providence, though the sufferings attached to my position increase with age.

He that wishes to leap over the stream of fashion and habits along which the world proceeds, must take a pretty long run from out of the crowd. To attempt the leap on the border of the stream, and as one of those who are resolved to follow its course, can only insure a plunge, with a laugh on the part of the spectators.

March 6th.

Why should I repine under the external evils of my situation? Why, on the contrary, am I not constantly breathing out feelings of thankfulness, that the power which has ordained the course of my life has, in a certain sense, forced me, at an early period, from the path of what is considered a happy life, thereby compelling my mind to exert itself to the utmost of its powers? While millions are raised but

very little above the brutes,—thousands are made to pant in the production of wealth,—and a vast number, under the false description of educated men, employ themselves in rivetting the chains and impeding the progress of the human mind—it has pleased Providence to urge me on, through an uncommon combination of events, to the noble work of combatting error, promoting mental liberty, and contributing to the great end (though, alas! how far do I still see that end) of subduing *enthusiasm and priest-craft,* the two most mortal enemies of Humanity.—Thank God!

March 10th.

There are beautiful hints in the New Testament in reference to the *spirituality* of true religion; but they are generally unheeded: Church-Christianity has perverted the sense of the word *spiritual,* and its derivatives. True Spirituality is incompatible with the *idolatrous* nature of the Christianity known among us. A religion which presents an *incarnate* God as the supreme object of worship, is essentially idolatrous. Idolatry does not consist in worshipping *material figures*; but in reducing the Deity to an object of the *imagination.* If God is made Man, it signifies little whether you worship the *image* within you, or whether you represent that image in wood or stone, according to the Roman Catholic practice. It is childish to make the evil of idolatry consist in the materiality of the idol: that evil arises from the in-

evitable degradation of the Deity, when conceived as *a Man.* All spirituality disappears in that case; and, whatever you do, the association of human passions and feelings with the idea of God (an association to which we have a most decided natural tendency) will take place in a higher or lower degree, according to the power or weakness of every individual mind.

One of the most pernicious consequences of this *refined* idolatry, is the restlessness which it communicates to Christian devotion. The idea of *service* to a Master represented as a human being, must give uneasiness to the sensitive mind. It is a real *θρησκεία,* in which the *zealous* servant must always be in doubt whether he has done enough. Here I would observe, by the way, that the passage about the "unprofitable servants," has to me the clearest internal marks of being an interpolation of the age when the *ascetic* notions began to corrupt Christianity. That this anxiety has no bounds, whenever it takes root in an earnest mind, either Catholic or Protestant, is a fact; and the clearest proof which experience could give of my *speculative* conclusion.

How different the true, *spiritual,* conception of the Deity, such as the light within us offers it to the individual who has no other sanctuary but the conscience! Whenever the ideas of wisdom, order, love, blend together into an imageless conception, and that conception draws the soul into the Infinite, in an act of longing love after the eternal source of our being, how pure, how tranquil, how confident is the adora-

tion which the soul performs! Tears indeed suffuse the eyes—for the longing itself reminds us of a state of suffering, of evil, and of struggle; but the mind turns back to the business and the pains of life, full of filial confidence, without a thought about acts of propitiation, about practical measures of safety against the wrath of the Idol-God of the multitude. It feels assured that *life* itself under a conscientious faithfulness to Reason, is the only acceptable service which the true, the spiritual, God expects from his creatures. This is true Faith; Πίστις.

Would you wish to have a test by which to try the genuineness of passages in the New Testament? Observe the consequences which they have produced, taken as rules of conduct, especially as rules of *perfection*. All those which, in the most direct manner, have been the origin of monachism—in a more general term, of *Ascetism*—must be excluded. The passage alluded to in the preceding Note is one of them. It belongs to the system of *flattering* devotion to that method of praying, and addressing the Deity, which supposes him to have all the habits and feelings of an Oriental despot, who likes to hear the people approaching him call themselves Dogs, dead Dogs, &c., &c.——

March 14th, 1837.

The insuperable difficulty of the theory which makes *personally-divine* authority the basis of religion is, that such authority must be inevitably *humanized*, i.e. made *doubtful* and *fallible* by passing through man. It is like *fairy gold*; to-day sterling wealth; to-morrow dross.

March 16th.

It is curious that my Admiration of the great poets has regularly increased with Age. This especially happens to me in regard to Shakspeare. When I came to England, though to a certain degree I had spoken the Language of the country from Childhood, I did not understand it sufficiently to enter into the spirit of Shakspeare's Plays. Nevertheless there were in them Characters, and passages, which I admired, and which, by their peculiar attraction, brought me constantly back to those Compositions. Without making his dramatic Works a peculiar Study, at any time, I have never dropt them for any considerable period. The Marks in my old little Copy prove this. Unfortunately I had it originally only stitched; and upon getting it bound, many of those Marks were pared off with part of the Margins: else I could show the progress of my Approbation by the gradual addition of the parallel Lines, which I have long used as a Sign of liking a Passage.

For a person whose original Standard of Taste has been the ancient Classics, especially if (as it

happened to me) he has studied the French Writers anterior to the Revolution, the stumbling-block in Shakspeare is found not so much in the want of the Unities, as in the novelty and boldness of his Metaphors. It requires a perfect familiarity with the living World of the Poet's Imagination, to perceive, at once, the Analogies from which his Metaphors proceed. In external Character and Form those Metaphors are so like the figurative Language of *Euphuism*, that any one who knows and properly detests it in the extravagant compositions of certain Italian and Spanish Poets, feels an instinctive dislike to many Passages of Shakspeare, merely from that *external* resemblance. But the difference between the Bombast of the former, and the true and natural Richness of the English Poet, is immense. The two styles have nothing in common except the *Novelty* of the Figures. The *Euphuist* seeks that Novelty blindly, rashly, extravagantly: Shakspeare finds it without effort, under the Inspiration of his Genius. His Metaphors are full of the truest and most vigorous Life. He shows you the secret ties of Relationship by which Nature connects the, apparently, most distant notions.

But it must be confessed that he fails in a few instances, and runs into something like the Bombast which, in his time, had begun to corrupt the Taste of all Europe. Here, as in all cases of superstitious Veneration, the blind Worshippers will stop their ears and cry,—Heresy! Such want of Discrimina-

tion, however, shows that the Taste, of which such people boast, is more Profession than Reality. Much indeed has been written on Shakspeare; but I conceive that there is still room for—or rather a real *Want* of—a work to guide the young Mind in the Study of his Plays.—I shall probably be laughed at when I say that I think I could write such a Work.—Let the scorning doubt continue: I am not likely to make the Trial.

March 17th.

The Work above suggested should begin by a View of the Nature of the Drama—disproving the old notions about the Necessity of the Unities:—showing that Dramas written upon that Plan form a distinct Class of Compositions; but that the Stage may be employed with good effect for the exhibition of *acted Tales*. In this other Class of Plays, Shakspeare is the great and unrivalled Model. (See what I have said in an Article on Spanish Literature, in the 1st No. of the London Review.)

This little Treatise should be followed by another —ON STYLE—showing the essential Difference between the poetical Style and the prosaic—the multitude of Gradations through which they run into each other—and the strong Marks of Distinction which Prose and Verse show at their opposite Extremities. The principal Object of this Discourse should be *Metaphor*, as the great source of Ornament in Language. Here the young Reader of Shakspeare

should be warned against the Fascination which might easily blind him to the occasional Errors of the great Model: and abundant Examples of splendid and genuine, as well as of shining but false ornament, should be given.

After this Introduction, the best Plays of Shakspeare should be examined. A young Person might be imagined to have attentively read—Lear for instance. Upon this supposition his attention should now be drawn to the Characters—an excellent opportunity of moral Instruction, without formal Preaching:—to the development of Lear's Madness—an admirable ground for psychological observations—without Pedantry—and of useful Remarks on the Passions—without *Moralizing*. Whenever Passages hitherto improperly expounded might occur—a fresh Attempt to explain them, if properly made, would be a peculiar source of interest. Every Play might, in this manner, be made a vehicle of most useful Instruction.

The Work should be called, "A Guide for the Young in reading Shakspeare."

March 23rd.

"Do not disturb the timid."—What a strange, unreasonable demand! It amounts to this: let the Thinking be, all over the world, the Slaves of the Unthinking. Mankind, under that System, might be compared to a Family, where the Children had the Privilege of filling the Rooms with Houses of

Cards, obliging the grown people to declare they beheld substantial Buildings, and preventing, nevertheless, their moving about, from fear of accidents to the little structures.

March 27th.

I am listening to one of the newly-invented hand Harpsichords, which, being in pretty good Tune, rather pleases me. *Patrick's Day in the Morning* is the best in its Collection of Tunes. And what a wonderfully characteristic Expression that simple Tune possesses: it makes my Heart beat with an accelerated but most soft and cheerful Motion. If I was asked what the Tune *does express,* I should say that it expresses *Reasonableness, Cheerfulness, and social Feeling,* most exquisitely combined in female Beauty. Let those for whom Music is only Noise, laugh if they please.

March 27th.

Last night, just before going to bed, I opened Hamlet, and, reading on for awhile, came to one of the most beautifully tender, as well as original illustrations, which can be met with in any Poet. It had never struck me in the same degree as it did this time. The Genius of Shakspeare seems here to have dropt a Simile of the greatest beauty almost unconsciously, as the Queen of the Fairies would drop a pearl of immense value, without much thinking

where, when, or how. It is in the beginning of Laertes' leave-taking Speech to Ophelia.

> "For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
> Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
> *A violet in the youth of primy nature,*
> *Forward, not permanent; sweet, not lasting;*
> *The perfume and suppliance of a minute;*
> No more."

The *simile* is so appropriate, and yet so novel; it is so full of Tenderness and Life, that I cannot well express all I feel in its Presence. But I was offended by the word *Suppliance,* which the Verse, as it is generally printed, requires to have the Accent on the *i,* as coming from the verb to *supply.* Here a rash Ingenuity, to which I confess that I am not a stranger in similar cases, fully possessed my mind, making me rejoice exceedingly in a conjectural Reading, which I immediately wrote at the bottom of the page.

> "The pérfume and (the) súppliance of a minute."

Súppliance, as derived from *Suppliant,* and meaning the act of *Supplication,* is not in the common Dictionaries. But what of that? The *infallible* Dr. Johnson has not even *Suppliance,* as derived from *Supply*; though either of the two must be recognized in the Passage before us. And how irresistibly beautiful does the Simile become when *Súppliance* is understood as *Supplication*—the Prayer of a Lover, accompanied by the *Perfume,*—the Incense attendant on Worship! You see the tender Violet, the Representative of the youthful Lover, courting a Look, from its humble Bed, and enveloping its Petition for

Favour in an invisible Cloud of her delicious Incense. But alas! the spirit of soberness came upon me this Morning, and dispelled the charming Delusion. *Suppliance* (that Spirit suggested to me) expresses the same, and through a similar *material* Notion, as *satis-faction,* or *grati-fication.* The Act of *affording,* or *supplying,* is naturally associated with the idea of *Pleasure.* Chaucer, by a similar Analogy, uses *Suffiance* for *Satisfaction* and *Pleasure.*— So farewell my pretty *suppliant* Violet! I lose you with much Regret!—Will nobody help me to recover you?

From Professor Norton.

Cambridge, March 27, 1837.

My dear Sir,

I immediately returned an answer to your very kind letter, dated more than a year ago (25th Feb. 1836), reciprocating, as you could not doubt I should, most cordially the feelings it expresses. I should be sorry to learn that you had not received it, and much more so, to know that you had been prevented by ill health, or any other painful circumstance, from gratifying my hopes of hearing from you again. I assure you that both Mrs. Norton and myself think of you, not as a new acquaintance, but an old friend.

I have deferred writing again till I could ask the favour of you to accept the accompanying volume. I shall be much pleased if it afford you any satisfaction. Should any circumstance prevent me from hearing from you directly, I trust I shall through my friends, the Miss Parks.

I am, my dear Sir,
With sincere respect and regard,
Your Friend,
ANDREWS NORTON.

March 30th.

Good Society is a Representation of what Society at large should be. I do not know how a young Person might better be told what truly good Society means, than by saying, that it is a meeting of People where every one forgets himself for the sake of the rest.

April 1st.

Supreme Reason is that which harmonizes the universe, reconciling all things that appear to clash and contend with each other. Finite Reason will therefore approach to the Supreme, in proportion as it imitates her work. This is practically recognized in every *reasonable* man.

Letter to Miss L——.

Liverpool, April 2nd, 1837.

My dear Miss L——,

It is a very long time since I wrote to you, or you to me. During the greatest part of that period I have been wretchedly ill; and, what is worse, continue still unable to rally. The Influenza attacked me severely about the end of January, and left me so weak, that I am still a prisoner, moving only from my bedroom to my study. For several days I was obliged to read and lie down alternately every five minutes; but my head recovered its usual strength soon after, and my reading has not been disturbed for the last month, except in a trifling degree. At first I attempted books of amusement; but could not bear them. It was like sweets to a nauseated stomach. Fortunately I took up one of Fichte's (the Father) works, *The Facts of Conscious-*

ness, which I had tried once or twice, but had found too difficult to be read cursorily, and became so deeply interested in it, that I got through it in a few days. The metaphysical taste being thus excited, I took up a work of Immanuel Hermann Fichte, the only child of the celebrated philosopher. Its title is *Über Gegensatz, Wendepunkt und Ziel heutiger Philosophie*, in three (independent) volumes. The first is an historical and critical introduction; the next is what might be called an examination of *Thought* (a masterly, but most difficult work), the third an Ontology. This work has been my great resource in my illness. I have not yet finished the third volume; but it is my intention, if my mental powers do not fail me, to return to the study of the second volume as soon as I shall have finished the third; and, if possible, to write an extract of it, which I should be inclined to call the *Philosophy of Logic*. But considering my state of health, this cannot be any thing but an amusing dream—one of those gleams of hope which play upon certain minds, almost till the last moment of existence.

I was practically convinced of the profound ignorance on these subjects which prevails in England; but had no conception of the extent of that ignorance before I had gone through this rather difficult study. I hardly venture to hope that the attention of any considerable number of real students will ever be drawn to this kind of mental science. People have not leisure for such speculations in a country where all are harrassed and hurried by the desire of wealth; some, indeed, with a view to make a splendid fortune; others by the necessity of keeping up a certain style of living, without which no one is considered a gentleman. In Germany, where a scholar may live upon very little, and yet escape degradation in the eyes of the world, there will always be a certain number of individuals who live exclusively for the purpose of advancing, not only *material* but, mental civilization.

I hope the influenza has spared both you and the rest of your family. I feël fatigued by writing.

Yours ever sincerely,

J. Blanco White.

April 3, 1837.*

I have just now received the two last volumes of Wordsworth's Poems, stereotyped edition. My efforts to find out that extraordinary excellency which W.'s friends would proclaim in the tone of a Crusade against the infidels who do not think with them, have been repeated and sincere; but I remain still a *heretic*. In this extensive collection there are indeed compositions of a very high merit: but there is also a great mass of things which, though scarcely ever without some merit, may be said to be published by an act of wilfulness, and for no other reason whatever. Wordsworth has been spoilt by a *coterie*, who, having formed a joint-stock company of wit (wit in the old sense) at school, have carried on its concerns with the most inflexible perseverance. By admiring and praising each other for half a century, they have, as it were, dunned a great part of the public into their interest. Whatever, therefore, owing to habit, to early friendship, to association with the scenery among which the poet has spent his life,—nay, with his wife and children (all of whom, I hear, are amiable)—whatever, I say, revives in the Poet's friends any pleasant recollection, be it even

* I am not quite confident that I am right here.—Aug. 23, 1839.

the most childish baby-rhymes, produces delight; and that delight is proclaimed over the country, through Papers, some way or other, in their interest.

To those who have not such associations, the Collection in six volumes is exceedingly fatiguing. One is angry almost at every other page, and yet there is so much that makes one respect the writer, that there is no avenging the annoyance by throwing the book away.

But, in regard to myself, the most unpleasant result of reading a considerable part of this Collection, page after page, is the incessant perception of something like a wailing note, uninterruptedly sounding, with no other change but that which arises from its approaching not unfrequently to a howl, like that of a man under the impression of inspiration, at the sight of sin. This mental drone-pipe is to me intolerable. "Wail, wail, daughters of the English Jerusalem, for all men are not priests, and all the world is not Tory; there are still wicked men who do not think Buonaparte a fiend incarnate. Woe, woe! Woe to the Church, Woe to the Constitution!"

In a word, Mr. Wordsworth is too frequently a *party poet,* and not a small portion of his inspiration comes from fanaticism.

P.S. If a good musician took it into his head to write down every thing he whistles to himself, or to his children—every idle voluntary which

comes up when he sits at the piano, he would produce a collection of music similar to that of Wordsworth's poetry. I do not deny that, if the musician were as eminent in his art as W. is in his, there would be many excellent pieces in the collection; but it would contain a great quantity of trash.

April 11.

The name of Biondo Flavio, or Flavio Biondo, Secretary to Eugenius IV., and one of the earliest antiquarians, presents a curious coincidence with my own. *Flavius* and *Biondo* mean the same—*fair*, as Blanco and White mean one and the same colour. It will be found in various papers concerning myself, that I am called White Blanco, in an inverse order to that in which I have signed my name ever since I came to England. *Biondo* must have been the antiquarian's true name, as *White* is mine.—See Hallam, *Lit. of Eur.* vol. i. p. 234.

April 13.

Would you have a clear, practical conception of Virtue? Study the early, the mythic history of Rome, and try to sympathise with her heroes—those men who lived only for the State; who appear to have lost their own personality, and to have identified themselves with the Republic. Having done this, reflect upon the incompleteness, and (one may well say) absurdity of limiting our moral relations to any por-

tion of the whole mass of mankind, and embrace the only immoveable conviction, on this point, that every individual man belongs to the whole race, or more properly speaking to the *Universe*, and above all to the source of that Universe, more truly than Roman patriots conceived themselves to belong to the State. And now you will have obtained the true idea of *rational*, real virtue, if you conceive your duties to God and his Creation, to be exactly analogous to those of those ancient Heroes.

I have heard a man of great talents, and conscientious besides, speak of the immortality of the soul as if virtue were absolutely dependent upon it. There is (as it has been frequently observed) a happy inconsistency which, in many cases, corrects the evil tendencies of mischievous abstract principles: and this happens in the instance to which I allude; else I would not give a straw for that man's virtue. Men who check their appetites upon *speculation*— who lay out their abstinence, or moderation (as they think) at a high interest, are most unsafe to deal with: for if, by some mistake or other, they were to believe that there was a cent. per cent. of happiness to be earned by a bold stroke, they would not hesitate a moment to sacrifice one half of mankind to their own private gain. I do not care whether they call that gain *spiritual*, or by any other name they please; it is all the same to me whether the payment is to take place in *Heaven*, or the Mahometan Paradise. The name of Virtue is desecrated by its being

given to that truly gross, though perfectly disguised selfishness. *Virtue* and *Self* are at open war. No man can be said to be virtuous who is not, like the American Calvinists mentioned somewhere by Dr. Channing, ready to submit to *reprobation*, as a necessary link in the chain of events predetermined by infinite Wisdom. There are few such Christian *Curtii*.

To the Rev. George Armstrong.

Liverpool, April 14th, 1837.

My dear Sir,

Long indeed have I been desirous to inquire after you, in the hope to hear that you have recovered from the severe affliction which you communicated to me many months ago. But my health has been wretched, especially since the latter end of January, when I was attacked by the Influenza to such a degree that I am still unable to walk out. A valued friend, the Rev. Mr. Tayler, Unitarian Minister, at Manchester, called to see me a few days ago, on his way to Dublin, where he was to preach on the occasion of a Unitarian Meeting. I had not however time to give him a line for you; but hoping that you might happen to meet him, I requested him to convey to you the assurance of my constant interest in your welfare. I now avail myself of the kindness of another friend, an Undergraduate of Trinity College, Dublin. It occurs to me that you may be resident in that city; but as I have not the means to ascertain the place of your present abode, I direct according to what you told me regarding your plans, in the last letter I received from you.

Every succeeding year of my life increases my separation from the world, and reduces me more and more to the life

of a Hermit. As long however as I shall preserve the power of reading as well as of thinking deeply over what I read, there will be no reason to pity me; for such intellectual pleasures are more than sufficient for my happiness in this world. I am very fortunate besides in the frequent society of a young Minister, in this town, the Rev. John H. Thom, a native of Ireland—the land which I shall never cease to love. * * *

My studies are chiefly in German Philosophy, especially that of Fichte, Junior, the only son of the celebrated Johann Gottlieb Fichte. This is an unexplored mine in this country. I wish I had undertaken this study several years ago, that I might have endeavoured to recommend it to English readers. It is true that German Philosophy has been guilty of strange aberrations; but it is also true that, without the free impulse of the philosophical mind which has occasioned those instances of extravagance, it would have been impossible to advance beyond the artificial limits which priestly domination, and its vast system of organized error, had set to the European mind. The Theology which still cramps the national intellect in these countries is nothing but *false Philosophy*. Philosophy, therefore, true Philosophy alone, can free the world from that monstrous evil.

I shall be glad to hear from you at all times. I can never forget that you were the immediate instrument in the hands of Providence, to awake me into the exertion which was required in order to snap the disguised mental fetters which I might otherwise have allowed to cripple me to the last day of my life.

Believe me, with sincere respect and gratitude,

My dear Sir,

Yours ever faithfully,

J. Blanco White.

April 28.

The pains and troubles of life—which are indeed, when considered by themselves, an immense burden, —are not too high a price for the enjoyment of a truly *rational* conviction that the universe is the work of an intelligent, and supremely *rational* (therefore *just*) Being.

To Professor Norton.

Liverpool, May 1, 1837.

My dear Sir,

Your kind letter of the 27th March, with the 1st vol. of your work on the Genuineness of the Gospels, came to my hands yesterday. Glad as I was to hear from you, and grateful for the honour of your presentation copy, the feeling of dissatisfaction against myself for not having written to you during a long period nevertheless prevailed. I will not acquit myself on the ground of the continued illness, which has kept me, and still keeps me, confined to the house, ever since the end of January. In addition to my habitual sufferings, I was then severely attacked by Influenza, which has prevailed in various parts of Europe, and continues, as it were, making a tour through different countries. I hear that it is now raging in my native town of Seville. But, even during the worst and most depressing stage of my disease, I have now and then been able to take up the pen. Why then did I not write to you? I will tell you the reason which, upon examination of the petty workings of an invalid mind, I conceive to be the true one. Your last letter could not be answered without entering upon a most difficult controversy. I perceived (and your work on the Gospels confirms my impression) that you make an historical conviction,—the belief in the genuineness of

the historical documents of the New Testament, and in the perfect truth of their statements, miraculous or not,—the basis and indispensable condition of Christianity. I do not discover in your answer to a general question of mine, the least disposition to allow a hesitation on this point. That point, however, is the last, which, after many years of anxious inquiry, I have settled with myself in a totally different light. Whenever, therefore, I thought of writing to you, I was compelled by my bodily weakness to postpone an effort of attention, which could not be avoided, if I was to say anything on the question at issue between us. But I might have lashed myself into exertion if my letter could have been a fresh means of sympathy between us. Unhappily it could not be so; and the repeated pain which I have had to endure, in the course of a now closing life, from the necessity of differing upon theological subjects with persons whom, instead of repelling, I eagerly wished to draw towards me, has almost deprived me of the necessary courage, which even the most friendly theological controversy requires. It is true that, during the period in question, my mind was so full of arguments against the theory which makes history and criticism the basis of Christianity, that I wrote several pages in order to unburden my head from those perpetually recurring thoughts; yet by addressing them to a person in whom I perceived a tendency towards my own view, I saved myself from the harrassing idea of producing a mental shock. This is the plain truth of the case as I find it in my own heart. But nothing could give me more pain than that you should mistake my reluctance to address you controversially, for a doubt of your candour and readiness to listen to the reasons of an opponent.

From every thing I observe in your writings, I find myself most willing, not to say *bound in justice*, to give you credit for a sincere love of the truth. I only recoil from *direct opposition*, and I fear that opposition is inevitable between us in relation to the point in question. I promise you how-

ever to read your book with friendly candour and a fair attention; and, unless my weakness increases so as to deprive me of the power of close thinking, to give you a general notion of the impression it makes upon me. I only beg you to remember that I am reduced to very great bodily helplessness, and that I have reason to fear that my mental activity will soon be essentially affected by a protracted state of the weakness which I have suffered.

Have the kindness to assure Mrs. Norton that I feel thankful for her expressions of friendship towards me. If you should have an opportunity of seeing Dr. Channing, you will oblige me by telling him that though illness has prevented my writing to him, I have nevertheless made repeated inquiries about him from his friend Miss Dix, and through our common friend Mr. Thom. This is, however, the only means of intercourse which I have had for many months with the interesting fellow-sufferer whose personal acquaintance I had the pleasure to make upon her arrival from America. Miss Dix is still prevented from moving about, and I have long been a close prisoner. I am happy to hear that she is improving. Believe me with sincere esteem and friendship, my dear sir,

Yours truly,
J. Blanco White.

To Mrs. Lawrence.

May 6, 1837.

My dear Mrs. Lawrence,

I was this very morning thinking of making inquiries about your health. I am glad that the fine weather is beginning to restore you. So it must when you can enjoy every beauty that adorns "the youth of primary nature;" but fine weather brings to me only the inconvenience of noise and bustle in the streets, and the glare reflected from a dirty piece of ground and the opposite walls.

I have had a relapse of the Influenza, which threatened to choke me, and which was relieved by a large blister. I continue extremely weak: to reach my hand for a book is an effort which makes me think twice. I feel not the least desire to go out.

Nevertheless I *read*—and this is all I want in the shape of life. What you say of Hallam's work only confirms my good opinion of your taste and judgment. Did you ever read a paper which I published in the *Variedades*, on the Celestina?* I have not the book; else I would send it to

[* "*La Celestina, Tragi-comedia de Calisto y Melibea.*"

No Spanish work, with the exception of Don Quixote, has ever possessed the celebrity of the Celestina, the witch or fortune-teller, whose strangely-chosen name has given its title to this dramatic novel. She is a sort of modern Canidia, whose arts are most minutely described. The description given by the servant Parmenio to his master, Calisto, of the obscure abode of the witch—of the philtres, medicaments, and cosmetics—by which she exercises her powers, is abundantly curious (for the author has managed to bestow on his vile sorceress some of the gloomy dignity with which Shakspeare has invested his Hecate): and the whole work is interesting, not only for the richness and beauty of its style, but for the singular picture which it exhibits of manners and society in Spain at the close of the 15th century.

The influence which this abandoned woman exercises over the minds and fate of the two lovers, Calisto and Melibea,—the wiles by which she drags down to ruin the innocent and lovely Melibea, whose pure and artless character is finely relieved by the darkness of her own, give a very extraordinary degree of force and interest to this work; and the exquisite pathos and tenderness of its conclusion, the picture of the youthful happiness and subsequent affliction of the lovers, which it exhibits, reminds one forcibly of that of Romeo and Juliet. But while such fame and admiration were awarded to his production, the modesty or timidity of the author kept him silent, and he persisted in literary *incognotism* which has left his name a question still undecided among the literati of his country. Still farther to puzzle his critics, he assumes in his preface that the conclusion of his novel is by another hand. Blanco White assigned the whole of it to Rojas de

you.' I believe I made it clear that Rojas is the sole and exclusive author of that extraordinary dramatic poem. It is absurd to suppose that the numerous threads thrown out in the first Act could be taken up and woven so skilfully by one who was not the inventor of the whole plot. People will not think for themselves, and copy some established report without discrimination. They want besides a *living* knowledge of the countries whose writers they undertake to examine; else, in regard to Spain, they would be aware that, even down to the time when I was a boy, *professional* men feared to ruin their characters by having any thing to do with works of mere pleasure. Rojas in his preface protests that it was only during a vacation that he *concluded* (a word of double meaning, which supports the fiction that another had *begun*) the Celestina. Such fictions—of a foreign original (as in the case of Amadis)—or some happily discovered Manuscript, were a *part* of every work of imagination, which writers of professional reputation could not omit. You may observe that Cervantes makes the existence of an Arabic Manuscript an important circumstance in the imitation of a book of Chivalry. The weight, however, of these considerations, in determining the authorship

Montalvan, amid a host of competitors, and had no respect for the claims of Rodrigo Cota, which are advocated by Bouterwek, and which it is thought were somewhat supported by the spirit of philosophic refinement exhibited in the whole tone and drift of his little poem, "Love shut out of the Flower Garden," of which there is a translation in a little vol. called "The Last Autumn," &c., by Mrs. Lawrence.

The Celestina has been translated, Blanco White says, into all the European languages, and different versions of it are to be found in the rarest collections of old English, Douce, Heber's, &c.—yet the writer does not remember the slightest literary notice of it, except Bouterwek's, and, copied from him, Sismondi's:—and, more lately, Hallam's,—all very imperfect. This curious, and in many respects beautiful novel was written in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, and, as it appears from one particular text, previous to the taking of Granada from the Moors.—R. L.]

of such a work as the Celestina, is not perceived by any one who has not seen the feeling from which such disguises arose, still in action, as has been my case. That feeling, however, was not peculiar to Spain. The absurd titles of the Italian Academies arose from the desire of giving people to understand that the Academicians considered their meetings as a piece of frolic. The fear of interference from a suspicious government might have some share in all this; but I remember when at the age of fourteen I was instrumental in forming an *Academy* for examining the beauties of Don Quixote, and holding *disputations* upon that work, in the style of Scholastic Theology, our friends took care that every external circumstance should bear the character of a *masçarade*; because any thing of that kind, undertaken seriously, would appear pert and conceited. But I had the pleasure of seeing that prejudice nearly subdued, by the exertions of myself and some very able young friends. We had a serious Academy of Belles Lettres, to which I chiefly owe the original development of my mind, till we were all about the age of four or five and twenty. We even held open meetings for the distribution of Prizes, at which men of the first rank were present. Ugo Foscolo was decidedly of my opinion in regard to the origin of the grotesque names of the Italian Academies.

Many thanks for your kind offer of wine. I want nothing of that sort. I have had much trouble and vexation from my servants. The housekeeper, a well-meaning but very silly person, is going. I hope her successor will have common sense. But really the class from which servants are taken is so generally perverted, that if I could do without them, I should consider myself a happy creature. But what can I do? Lodgings at my time of life, and in my state of health, are to me a perfect horror. It is easier, after all, to change my two servants, than my several hundreds of books from place to place.

I have scribbled away till I am giddy, and probably have produced the same sensation in your head.

I congratulate you on the return of your "sodier boy," as Burns, I believe, calls a soldier lad with (to me at least) exquisite effect.

I wish you all manner of happiness.

Yours faithfully,

J. Blanco White.

From Dr. Channing.

Boston, Dec. 17th, 1836.

My dear Sir,

An article of mine, hastily written for a periodical, has been published by the editor as a pamphlet.—I send you a copy for one reason only. It treats chiefly of Catholicism, a subject you understand very much better than I do. I submit it to you simply to get your views of its correctness, which I shall value the more, as I may pursue the subject. I trust you will confide in me enough to speak with perfect frankness, if you speak at all—and I assure you your silence would give me no pain. I do not think of writing any thing on Catholicism separately; but, if I have strength, I wish to give some views, which seem to be overlooked, respecting the great sects or divisions of the Christian world.

Very respectfully, your friend,

W. E. Channing.

Letter to Dr. Channing.

Liverpool, May 9th, 1837.

My dear Sir,

It was only last night that I had the pleasure of receiving both your kind note to me and your printed letter on Ca-

tholicism. Though in a miserable state of bodily weakness, I did not go to bed till I had read your admirable Essay, marking every striking passage with my pencil. The pages are full of my usual marks of approbation. I can only say that you have given utterance to thoughts which my experience has for many years made habitual to my mind. But your manner of stating those views is so eloquent, so profound and philosophical, that I might say with truth, they came to me with all the charms of novelty. But it is in your first and fundamental principles of Christianity that I find the most heartfelt satisfaction. The words, p. 8, beginning, "A common mistake is," and ending "as the nearest fellow-creature," should be engraved in view of every pulpit. I admire also your observations on the "yoke of opinion" which is unfortunately laid on the neck of even *Unitarian* Ministers, in direct contradiction of the true Protestant principle which delivered them from the fetters of Creeds. That, in regard to civil life, the power of opinion "suppresses the grosser vices, rather than favours the higher virtues," (p. 6.) is a profound observation. Unfortunately, it is *that* restraint which has the highest attractions in the eyes of the mass of a wealthy and thriving population. Whatever love of virtue the generality of such a mass of people usually feel, has its root in absolute selfishness and love of ease. Religion to them supplies the place of a strict police, which enables them to enjoy themselves without disturbance. But you wish to have my opinion respecting your views of Catholicism: I will therefore enter more particularly upon that point.

I have already said, that my habitual thoughts on that subject coincide with yours. But to the reasons which you so ably state why Protestantism must fail in every attempt to have its churches visited out of the regular times for service, I have frequently added one which you seem to have overlooked—the supposed bodily presence of Christ in the consecrated wafers which are constantly kept in most Ca-

tholic churches. Any one may easily conceive the power of this attraction for a credulous and affectionate mind. Add to this, the sanctity and inviolability which it gives to churches in the eyes even of the otherwise most profligate believers. Hence it is that a very slight superintendence preserves the utmost quiet in the Roman Catholic temples. But it is absurd to wish for the coexistence of things incompatible by their nature; to desire to be both Protestant and Catholic; to encourage and oppose superstition; to deny the sanctity of any particular place, and to wish people to go to church, because the walls of the building are holy.

There is only one *query* among my marks; it relates to your observations on the variety of Protestant sects. That such a variety was inevitable, when the supreme authority of the Church of Rome had been effectually opposed, is perfectly true. Yet I see less of good in this necessary evil than you appear to discover. It is true that their tenets suit the various tendencies of the human mind, as these tendencies show themselves at different stages of mental development. I, however, lament that all sects proceed upon the ground that their respective characteristic views are a complete and perfect whole; thus banishing from the minds of their followers all idea of future progress. Such bodies of Christians have never taken their ground as an encampment,—but as fortified positions, to be made the centre of hostile operations, or at least points of resistance to all who wish to move on. We experience this evil most bitterly in this country. All Dissenters, except ourselves, are ready to join with the Established Church in opposing progress.

But I must conclude. The root of all the evils which oppress true Christianity lies concealed in the idea of some *infallibility* residing somewhere among men, and ready to serve their purposes, as well as to spare them the watchfulness and constant exertion of a truly spiritual life. This is the source of the progress which Catholicism is certainly making: Protestants sow the seeds of Popery, and then

complain of the harvest. If Religion is grounded upon some *infallibility* which man must *infallibly* distinguish from error, we must all unquestionably go to Rome for salvation.

I have been more than four months confined to the house in consequence of an attack of the *Influenza*, over and above my habitual sufferings. Excuse, therefore, the confusion of a letter written in a state of great weakness. I am told that there is a probability of your visiting England. It would give me the greatest pleasure to be able to shake you by the hand, and talk to you upon these subjects. Many thanks for your very kind remembrance of me, and for the high gratification which your letter has afforded me.

Believe me, with most sincere esteem,

My dear Sir,

Yours ever faithfully,

J. Blanco White.

May 25th.

Of what importance can it be to the world that the delight which I have derived this day from my various reading, uninterrupted by any external call on my attention, has partaken of the character of sublime enthusiasm, and has made me live, many hours together, in conscious gratitude to the eternal Source of my life, the Giver of all its blessings? The world cannot take any interest in this fact; but I should contradict the feeling of gratitude which I have just mentioned, if, being in the habit of recording certain states of my mind, I neglected to enter this testimony to the power which mental activity has over external circumstances, in the way of making us independent, for happiness, from things which the greatest portion of mankind think indispensable for it.

One great source of pleasure in this last and trying period of my life, arises from my renovated acquaintance with the French and Italian writers who were the companions and instructors of my youth. During the long study of English literature which I begun when more than seven and twenty years ago I settled in this country, I had neglected my old literary friends. Now when I turn back to them, far from having lost my early taste for their beauties, I find it so much enlarged and strengthened, I have so many objects of comparison for the purposes of contrast and relief, that my enjoyment is much greater than before. In endeavouring to cure myself of an attachment to those writers, which I suspected had been excessive, I fell into considerable exaggerations. These however have vanished with age and experience; and now I find that, without being exclusive, I can fully enter into the peculiar spirit of the various ages and nations, having nevertheless the eternal and invariable standard of Nature for my guide.

What I chiefly rejoice in is, that these mental enjoyments of my old age lead me to God, and fill me with increased trust in him.

To Mrs. Lawrence.

May 29th, 1837.

My dear Mrs. Lawrence,

I return Roberts' Views, with many thanks. As works of Art they are admirable; but they are *faithless Beauties.*

The architectural parts are true in regard to individual Buildings. The *Giralda* of Seville, for instance, is very correct, but, like the House of *Loretto*, it seems to have been removed with the foundations to a place which I cannot recognise. The Artist has, in fact, disposed of his *detached* sketches according to his fancy, and, for the sake of effect, grouped them without any regard to truth. What is absolutely odious to me is the *living* part of the views. His figures are like *broken* Spanish to me—false—incongruous —exaggerated. He thought the Monks more picturesque than the Clergy, and he crowds the Cathedrals with those most inappropriate figures. How would an Englishman like views of London with the whole costume disturbed and caricatured? But so it happens with everything that comes into the English *Market*. It is the same with books of Travels—very few, indeed, excepted. . . . . .

I will say little of myself. I attempted a walk a few days ago, which made me exceedingly ill. I cannot gain ground —I feel totally exhausted.

Yours ever sincerely,

J. Blanco White.

P.S.—I recommended my Bookseller to send you a German collection of Modern Spanish poetry, which he sent for my inspection. Many of the pieces in the Second Volume were originally read in the Juvenile Academy at Seville, which I have mentioned to you. I could hardly bear the impression they made upon me when I looked over the collection. I am sincerely thankful to those who furnished the editor with that part of his materials, that they did not mention me.

June 3rd.

Extract from J. G. Fichte.

"The whole of moral existence is nothing but an uninterrupted Lawgiving of the rational Being to himself; where the Lawgiving ceases, there Immorality begins."

Why do I receive an indescribable pleasure when I find such a sentence as this? Can any other be the cause, but that my whole spiritual being responds to this great truth, and delights in it?—No: I am sure of this more than of anything else. The sentence is in itself simple enough.

June 11th.

All the ancient Asiatic Temples had an Establishment of Slaves, who belonged to the Priesthood.—That Custom has revived, in a spiritual shape, among us. I have just been looking at a long double row of Girls and Boys, walking slowly towards Mr. S——'s Church. What a monstrous medley will the Minds of those Children present if they actually take in the Instruction of their Priest! No one can form to himself an Idea of such a state of Mind who does not know Mr. S——, one of the greatest Luminaries of the Evangelicals. It is probable, however, that the children will keep very little of what they hear under the name of Religion; but, unfortunately in most cases, the mental Distortion will continue through life, disabling the priestly Slaves from all healthy and

vigorous use of their Faculties.—It is melancholy to consider the Numbers who are thus mentally crippled by the activity of the various Priesthoods. Mr. S——'s School appears to me to consist of from two to three hundred Children.—Does Mr. S—— and his Compeers love Education?—Yes; passionately—they love the Education which produces Slaves to their own priestly Class. Allured by the name Education, the deluded Parents lend their Children that the Priest may BREAK THEM IN, and fit them to his Service.—Until all Priesthoods shall be abolished, Mankind cannot move on steadily towards the Point of moral and intellectual dignity which belongs to our Nature.

To Dr. Channing.

Liverpool, June 27th, 1837.

My dear Sir,

Though much exhausted in Body and Mind, I will not let pass the Opportunity which Miss Tuckerman's return presents me of sending you a Line. It has been to me a real Satisfaction to have enjoyed, though for a short Time, the Friendship of one that glories in calling you her Second Father. We lose Miss Tuckerman with sincere Regret.

I wrote to you on the 9th of May, last, and committed the Letter immediately after to my dear Friend the Rev. Mr. Thom, who engaged to procure it a conveyance. I hope the Acknowledgment it contained of the Pleasure with which I had read your Letter on Catholicism, has reached you.

Since in January last I was attacked by the Influenza, my Weakness has kept me constantly confined to my House.

I am, however, generally able to read, not only with Attention, but frequently with the most heartfelt Pleasure and Interest. As long as it shall please God to grant me this Enjoyment I shall not be tempted to complain of my Lot. But I feel unable to undertake anything that requires a more active mental Exertion.

Excuse therefore the shortness of this Note; which is intended only as a testimony of my constant Respect and Esteem towards you.

Believe me, my dear Sir,
Ever your sincere friend,
J. Blanco White.

To Professor Norton.

Liverpool, June 27, 1837.

My dear Sir,

On the 30th of April last, I had the pleasure of receiving your 1st volume on the Authenticity [Genuineness] of the Gospels, and a kind letter from you. Anxious to acknowledge your kindness without delay, I wrote to you immediately, requesting my friend, the Rev. Mr. Thom, to forward the letter through some American house of this place. I hoped at that time to recover so far out of the weakness in which a severe attack of the Influenza had left me, as to be able to give you a detailed account of the impressions which your work should leave upon me when I had read it through. I, indeed, perused it without delay; but I have been and continue to be in such a state of exhaustion, that I cannot write even a common letter without great fatigue. I have, therefore, taken up the pen only not to lose the opportunity of private conveyance which the return of Miss Tuckerman of Boston offers me at this moment. I must confine myself to some very general observations.

Whatever Ability and Learning can do, you have certainly accomplished in the defence of the Authenticity of

the Gospels. But I cannot raise my conviction upon that point to any degree of certainty strong enough to bear up my religion. It is, after all, a most complicated and evanescent critical evidence that lies at the bottom of *purely Historical Christianity*, a religion of books and documents, which, unless it be ultimately grounded upon the infallibility of a Priesthood, is totally unfit for the mass of mankind. Christianity must consist in things on which every morally living conscience can pass its judgment. Otherwise, like all other religions, it would require a Priesthood. The value of the Christian documents is great, but when that value is made to depend upon their authority, it vanishes in regard to the mass of mankind. The critical basis upon which such an authority must be established is accessible but to a very few individuals, and even to many among those privileged judges, that basis appears wavering and insecure. My conclusion is, that Christianity cannot depend upon such questions.

I am, however, exhausted by the effort which I have made to convey to you the plain state of my mind upon the subject of your work. I must add, nevertheless, that I differ from your estimate of the general character of the early Christians. I have touched upon this subject in my answer to Moore's Travels of an Irish Gentleman in search of a Religion—which I entitled *Second Travels* of an Irish Gentleman, &c., without my name. I have only one copy of that work, else I would send you the book itself to supply, in part, the scantiness of this answer. I trust, however, that in spite of its total unfitness for the purpose which it should fulfil, you will receive it as a proof of my sincere respect for you, and my consideration for whatever comes from your pen.

Believe me, with great esteem, my dear Sir,

Your ever sincere friend,

J. Blanco White.

July 3rd.

It is remarkable that when any Man manifests strong Convictions, especially if he does not share them with a Party, he is said to have strong Prejudices. The Reason of this Perversion of Language appears to me to be the Scarcity of strong individual Convictions. Observing that unhesitating Assurance is generally the effect of early-imbibed and never-examined Views, people conceive that every steady Conviction must proceed from the same source. The World is indeed divided, with very few exceptions, into two large Portions; those who believe steadily, by early Habit and Prejudice,—and those who have no steady Belief. When a Man, therefore, has, by deliberate individual Examination and Experience formed to himself settled Convictions, in opposition to the various Parties which divide Society, such a mental Phenomenon is attributed to Prejudice—the only Cause, known to the Generality, which produces external Symptoms similar to those of real Conviction. My immoveable persuasion of the Evils of Popery is called Prejudice; though it is unquestionable that however erroneous it might be, that intimate Persuasion has not taken Root in my Mind *previous to judgment*,—which is Prejudice—*præjudicium*, but in consequence of a long and intimate Acquaintance with the Popish system and its practical Effects. My present strong conviction of the Mischiefs attached to all manner of Priesthoods and Churches united by Dogmas, will be called Preju-

dice, though it has required the labour of more than twenty years, and the most painful sacrifices of Feeling, to overcome my early-imbibed Attachment to such Systems—in a word, to conquer my PREJUDICES.

July 5th.

It is a universal mistake among People who make the essence of Religion consist in the acceptance of certain Doctrines, that strong fear and reluctance to deny such Doctrines are identical with a Belief in them. Having carefully examined myself, I am bound to declare that, since I became a Protestant, I never had any other Belief in the great Dogmas of the Church. For a long time I would not for the World have denied those Tenets; yet I was not RATIONALLY convinced of their Truth. I shrank instinctively whenever an opportunity presented itself to prove them to others. All that I could do was to declaim on the *general* Topics of Faith and Unbelief: meaning by the latter, *what is certainly wrong*, a total Disregard of the eternal Source of our Being—a confining of our Views to this present Life of Sense.

The following sentence from Goethe's *Life* may be of infinite service to many. I have, for many years, acted in agreement with its spirit, though it is only this day that I have read it.

Die Zeit ist unendlich lang, und ein jeder Tag ein Gefäss, in das sich sehr viel eingiessen lässt, wenn

man es wirklich ausfüllen will.* III. Band, p. 418. ed. Paris.

Liverpool, July 30th.

Immortality.

In conformity with my Maxim, that every thinking Man should put his Fellow-Men in possession of the results of his internal Experience, I wish to record a mental Fact relating to myself which, as far as I can judge, is not wanting in importance. I remember that even in my Childhood I had a Fear of a future Life, and shrunk from all the Pictures of Heaven which abound in the Catholic Books of Devotion. I preserve a pretty distinct recollection of a Dream, which I had about my eleventh or twelfth year. In that Dream I felt disembodied and climbing up (it was a laborious Motion) through a dimly-lighted passage, at the end of which I found myself —as if I had been a Swedenborgian—in a House very like those to which I was accustomed in Spain, full of Angels such as I saw daily in Pictures, who welcomed me and told me I was really in Heaven. Though I had now nothing to fear from the Place of Torments, which I almost distinguished at the foot of a long flight of Stairs, the deepest Melancholy took hold of me, because Heaven appeared to me a very dull habitation, and I did not know what

[* Time is infinitely long, and each day a vessel, into which a great deal may be poured if we really desire to fill it.]

to do with myself through a long, long Eternity. I was relieved, when waking, I found that I was still on Earth.

"What a childish Dream," some People will say. I suspect that the charge of Childishness lies at the Door of those who make it. The Child did not contrive the Dream for himself: it was the pure spontaneous result of those Pictures of Heaven which are supposed to have the greatest Power to *bribe* Mankind into Virtue. Now, if such Allurements had any real influence they would chiefly exert it upon such a being as I then was—a stranger to the Passions and Interests which bind Men to this Life. Yet the most glowing Pictures of a future Life had no attraction for me. The Fear of an interminable, suffering Existence possessed my Soul, and, though I had never thought on Annihilation, I remember that I preferred *not to be*, to the *Chance* of living for ever with the Angels, which I felt somewhat in the character of living in a Church.

The same indifference for every modification of Heaven, as a Picture addressed to the Imagination, has shown itself within my Heart's core, during the most *devout* Periods of my Life, both in the Catholic and the Protestant Church. Whenever, only a few years ago, I endeavoured to enliven my Christian Hope by thinking of that *local* Heaven where I was to go after Death, the effect was so opposed to that which I intended, that I was obliged to turn my Thoughts another way. In a word—that second

Life, similar to this, that Resurrection in the Body, was always oppressive to my Mind. Is it that Life in the Body has been so devoid of Happiness to me, so laborious and up-hill, that my Feelings shrink from the notion of Perpetuity in every conceivable modification of it? It may be so. But why did this Feeling begin before I had tasted Unhappiness? Or was it that *Unhappiness* was actually lodged in my Soul, by means of the religious Education to which I was so anxiously subjected from the first opening of my Mind? Had the name of Heaven poured into my dawning Sensibility some drops of that Bitterness, which has infected every Sweet of Life to me? I cannot answer these questions; but I am able to state a plain Fact. My Mind is possessed by a sense of the most filial Confidence in the Supreme Source of its spiritual, rational Existence. I do not think it probable that any *real* Existence in the World shall be annihilated. But I am averse to the activity of the Imagination on this Point. I hope to die full of Confidence that *no Evil* awaits me: but any *Picture* whatever of a future Life distresses me: I feel as if eternal Existence was already an insupportable Burden laid upon my Soul.—I have never felt any horror of Annihilation; I will not prescribe, even by Wishes, to my God; but I would take it at his Hands without Complaint.

To the Rev. John James Tayler.

Liverpool, Aug. 6th, 1837.

My dear Sir,

Mr. Thom, on his return from your Neighbourhood yesterday evening, communicated to me your wish to borrow my Guigniaut-Kreuzer. Nothing, indeed, can give me more Pleasure than an opportunity of doing something pleasing to you. I send the whole of what I possess of that Work, and beg that you will keep it freely and without limitation of Time. I have read the early Part of the Work, and am not likely to have an occasion of looking into it again for a long while. I am sorry that, allured by the praises of Benjamin Constant, I sent for Gurgniaut's Translation. Whatever may be the Value of his Notes, the irregularity of the Publication, and the danger, which appears to me *at present* a certainty, of never having it completed, are objections which no advantages of detail can overcome. All my Enquiries have hitherto failed to inform me whether any other Volume has been published since 1835, or whether the Plates belonging to the last-published Portion—the Mythology of Greece and Rome—have appeared. I fully intend, if ever I can afford the Expense, to get the German Original; for in reading the imperfect Translation I feel as if I was trifled with and almost mocked. The wretched French Politics I believe are the source of these Irregularities in the labours of the most eminent literary Men of that Country. Guizot and Cousin have deserted Literature, in which they gave the most abundant Promise of Usefulness, and become Dabblers in Politics. I am thoroughly sick of the World; I find my Mind growing more and more *desolate* every Day. Nothing but my strong Faith in Truth supports me. You are, my dear Sir, among the very few whom I know to live by the same Faith. I wish we were nearer, that we might have frequent communication, "that I might be comforted together with you by the mutual

Faith both of you and me." What would be the Astonishment of many on seeing me applying these Words to my all-reforming Principles!

Some time hence, if I find myself with sufficient Strength and Leisure, I shall beg the use of your Gesenius's Isaiah. I will let you know when I am ready.

I am very much disheartened by the present aspect of things in this Country. I fear the Conservatives will take the Reins of Government ere long. There are *no Convictions* among us, except those of long-established Prejudice. The Reformers of all kinds are like a Rope of Sand.

Yours, ever with great Esteem,
J. Blanco White.

Aug. 8th.

Expecting to see Mrs. Whately and two of her daughters, I could not settle to any reading. A little after two o'clock I had the great and deeply agitating pleasure of seeing those dear Friends. Received some German books from Senior, and a most kind letter from the Archbishop, urging me to change my residence to a warmer place.

Liverpool, Aug. 9th.

Yesterday, Mrs. Whately, and her daughters Jane and Mary, came to see me. It is nearly three years since I tore myself from them with such Pain and Anguish as few will be able to conceive. In my present state of nervous Weakness, my emotion was such that I feared I could not preserve a full command over me

—and even that I should physically sink under it. Conscious of my own deep and ardent Love of them, and certain of their great Attachment to me, it yet seems as if this Meeting alone could have revealed to us the full extent of our mutual Attachment. The children, as Mrs. Whately assures me, never forget me. When my God-daughter Blanche wrote to me a few lines some time ago, and I sent her a short answer, her mother tells me that she actually moistened the paper with her tears. When, after all my efforts not to give way to the Impulse of Feeling, I went to bed last night, the tears flowed irresistibly from my eyes, and I could hardly compose myself to sleep. Those who have spent their Lives in the enjoyment of regular, every-day, unimpeded Affections, will perhaps reproach me with Unmanliness. But little do they know what it is for a Heart, overflowing with kindness from the earliest dawn of my rational Life, and repeatedly torn away by the external power of circumstances from every Object to which it has attached itself—little do such People know how cruelly painful it is for such a Heart to have the whole course of its sufferings brought home at the close of Life, by the transient Presence of the dear Beings to which it clung last, with a prospect of final Rest, and whom the same inflexible Destiny compelled it to forsake.

The delight, however, which this Meeting has left in my heart's core is a treasure which I would not have missed for the world. Our parting was such as

might be expected from such pure and ardent Love. And yet the accursed Poison of Orthodoxy—the notion that eternal happiness must depend upon the acquiescence in some at least of the Doctrines of that unknown Being—the Church—poured one drop of bitterness into our cup of friendship. My dear Friend, Mrs. Whately, in tears, declared to me her secret hope that I should return to the *Divinitarian* Faith. She said she had studied that point according to my method, (I never attempted to explain any such method to her, because I knew that she was in circumstances which absolutely prevented its application,) and that she was convinced I was wrong. What could I say to this? I could not harrow her heart by the suggestion of any fundamental doubts invalidating her conviction. I begged her not to allow her kindness towards me to excite alarm in her breast about my spiritual safety. I told her I was sure she was safe in following her convictions, and that I felt the same or greater certainty in regard to myself:—"the more I have studied those points (I added), the more calm and steady has been my conviction." "Oh, that is what I fear!" she answered, while tears flowed down her cheeks.

No one, of course, who has not pursued these subjects with the long, earnest, deliberate attention which I have employed upon them, can conceive the deep-seated horror which such repeated experiences of the poisonous effects of dogmatic Belief raise in my soul. And yet I would not, if I had the best

opportunities, attempt to eradicate it from such hearts as Mrs. Whately's. It would be like dissecting a person alive. There is such an immense mass of undisturbed Error, of Error which has become incorporated with the best and noblest feelings of her spiritual being, that to attempt a separation would be worse than a deadly blow at her heart. What would be her condition, if it were possible that she saw all that I see in that subject! It is dreadful to consider such an event, though I know it to be morally impossible.

I am sure that the most difficult kind of toleration is that which I have used towards my best friends. To leave them undisturbed, whilst my Forbearance appears Distrust of my own Views, is very hard. But I will not allow my Pride to assume the appearance of Zeal. Let them think what they please, provided I do not make them unhappy. If there were the remotest hope of delivering them from that monster — Dogmatical Superstition — I would not spare myself; but England has provided the most ample and most treacherous means to fetter men's understandings.

August 18th.

Finished Carlyle's French Revolution, which I read through with intense interest. He has made a *revolution* in the method of writing *History*.

August 28, 1837.

(*For an Album.*)

To write in an Album !—a difficult Task,
Though the Paper be glazed, and though Beauty may ask.
For Ink, you must use the first Tints of the Spring;
Your Pen, you should take from a Butterfly's wing;
Of Gossamer words all your Lines should be wrought,
Then beware lest you crush the whole work—with a Thought.
For my Goose-quill, believe me, such Books are too thin;
Wait till Albums are bound in Deal-boards and Calf-skin.

August 29.

(*A Thought suggested by the Custom of writing a few Lines to be kept as a Memorial of the Writer.*)

Mysterious Lines! the Heart is loth to tell
The gloomy Sources of your wonted Spell.
Absence and Death, these are the magic springs
That turn to Treasures e'en such worthless things.
—But why complain? The softness that pervades
Man's truest Virtues, springs beneath Death's shades.
'Tis Sorrow tempers Joy's too dangerous glare;
Too proud would be the Eye ne'er moistened by a tear.

J. B. W.

August 30, 1837.

(*Proofs of Idleness, not of Conceit; under Suffering.*)

Why this Displeasure rankling in the Breast?
Shall Anger calm the Soul, restore my Rest?
An idle aim, to reason Pain away,
O'er suffering Sense thy Reason has no sway.
"Endure," such her command, "and know thy lot,
Taste all its Bitterness, but curse it not.
The Power that made thee did not act from spite,
Else would thy Heart be closed to all Delight;
Else would thy Soul be bound by such a spell,
As would make Life and Thought much worse than Hell.
Wilt thou be thankless? Wilt thou God accuse?
Have not his Blessings oft, like morning dews,
Called you to Life again, refreshed your Soul,
Healed, for a time, your Wounds, and made you whole?
To thee the power of Thought was freely given,
And boundless Love, the noblest gift of Heaven.
Though often feeling the paternal rod,
Hast thou not been a Minister of Good?
Scanty, 'tis true; yet God's, and not thy own;
He would not then his Instrument disown.
Sure of his Love, cheer up; short is the way,
Bestow one kindness more, and close your weary Day."

Sept. 3rd.

Civil Liberty is morally useful, only inasmuch as it makes the free individuals *respect themselves.* When Liberty does not produce this effect, it is mere License, its end Anarchy, and, through Anarchy, Slavery. Despotism is preferable to Liberty, when it fails to produce individual Self-Respect, for Despotism is, at all events, Order. The difficulty of establishing free institutions in such countries as Spain, Por-

tugal, Greece, arises from the total absence of every seed of that Self-Respect which Liberty may indeed raise in a *rude* Soul, but which it will never produce in a degraded one.

Sept. 10th, 1837.

Baden Powell came to see me in the afternoon.

From Dr. Channing.

Sept. 10th, 1837.

My dear Sir,

I thank you for the effort you made to write me in May last, when you were labouring under severe indisposition. You will be rewarded, when I tell you how much pleasure your letter gave me. I am so liable to self-distrust, that the confirmation of my views by those who have had peculiar advantages for judging them wisely, gives me relief and strength. I know no one, whose opinion of my Letter on Catholicism I should value as much as your own. The Essay, indeed, was a humble one, hardly worth the notice you gave it. Still, to know that I have expressed some great truth, even in so humble a form, is a happiness. To know that I have escaped the extravagances and prejudices into which difference of faith so commonly leads, is a relief. The fear of giving circulation to error has made me almost too cautious about giving my mind to the public. In this state of mind, it has been a comfort to me to see my writings subjected to unsparing criticism. If I have published little myself, I have drawn out a great many publications from others; so that I trust that my mistakes will do no great harm. Should a few years of tolerable health be given me, I shall not regret that I have deferred writing on many subjects; for many mists which once hung over them have been scattered, and I shall write with greater consciousness of seeing my way plain before me.

Your remarks about infallibility in your letter and various publications are very interesting. One thing must make

us indulgent towards many of the ardent champions of infallibility. They feel as if there were no medium between this and utter scepticism. The dread of losing hold of vital truths is what produces in multitudes a shrinking from doubt and investigation. They suspect little that they are betraying a singular distrust of these truths, by their anxiety to keep them from being called in question. It is not sufficiently considered that infallibility, to be good for any thing, must be sustained by *infallible reasoning*: and this furnishes an argument against Catholicism which is not always brought out with sufficient clearness. The Catholic Church, starting from the fallibleness of individuals, requires them to bow to an infallible head or tribunal. But unless the individual be infallible, in settling the question where the infallibleness resides, he is left in as much uncertainty as if it did not exist. Individual infallibleness is thus essentially involved in Romanism, although the denial of it is the very foundation on which the system rests.

I hope when I next hear from you, that I shall receive better accounts of your health. I desire for you, after the storms you have passed through, an easy, peaceful, cheerful decline of life; and this tranquillity, though it can only flow from within, requires, as one of its conditions, that the nervous system should be in health.

I have told you how interesting your history is to me, and I hope you will leave it to us. The conflicts and progress of such a mind take stronger hold on me than the most exciting details of outward events.

I have just published a tract, partly political, on the relation of this country to Texas. I name it, only to apologize for not sending you a copy. It is so local, that I doubted whether it would interest you. If you wish to see it, you can obtain it from Mr. Martineau.

The legible handwriting of your letters is quite a reproof to me. I hope I do not tax your eyes too much.

Very respectfully your friend,

Wm. E. Channing.

Liverpool, Oct. 6th, 1837.

My dear Baden Powell,

Thanks to my *critical* Eyes, I soon discovered the Interpolation of your Letter; and, to prove the Danger of those heretical Practices, I fell into a Fit of Laughing which might have unsettled my nervous System for the important Process of Digestion (for, to be accurate, I was at Dinner) if I had not tempered my unbecoming Levity with a Dose of Orthodox Anger. I clearly and at once perceived the Perils that beset you, and calling up my whole knowledge of the Methods by which proud Spirits may be tamed, I made out the following Prescription to be applied *secundum artem*.

Ten Pages of Tracts for the Times, to be taken daily before Breakfast.

One grain of *V. Ts's* Controversial Wit before Dinner. N.B., this Medicine is as powerful as Arsenic, and must be used cautiously.

To dilute the whole, take large Doses of University Sermons *ad libitum*.

By Perseverance in this Method, and great Abstinence from the Exercise of Thinking (which heats the blood) you may bring down your dangerous companion to the Oxford Standard, and save her from being *proctorized*, or made to do Penance before the C. C. C. Committee.

Well now, you have tempted me into something like a Frolic, in spite of my Solitude. But, as you well know, I have a quick Sympathy with the Happiness of my Friends; and never did I indulge it more sincerely than in regard to both of you. I wish with all my Heart I could witness it in your own House; but there is a physical Impossibility, on the one Hand, and a moral one on the other, to prevent it. There are too many things which I love dearly at Oxford, and which to behold in the present state of that Place, would really break my Heart. There are others the sight of which I could not endure. No; I must not even think of such things.

I reserve the next page for your Lady, to whom as in Duty bound I would have given the Precedence, but for the important matter of the Interpolation with which I was obliged to begin.

Ever your affectionate Friend and Well-wisher,

J. Blanco White.

To Mrs. B. Powell.

My dear Friend,

I fully expected that you would be happy, and you are so. This is a great source of Pleasure to me.—You want the Verses I read to B. Powell, and they will take up the whole of this Page. But you must blame yourself for the Waste of Paper. Here they are.

Lines written on a Leaf of Miss Rathbone's Album, of Liverpool.

Reader, thou look'st upon a barren Page:
The blighting Hand of Pain, the Snows of Age,
Have quenched the Spark that might have made it glow.
Long has the writer wandered here below
Not friendless, but alone; for the foul Hand
Of Superstition snapped every Band
That knit him to his Kindred: then he fled,
But after him the hideous Monster sped
In various Shapes, and raised a stirring Cry:
"That Villain will not act a pious Lie."
Men, Women, stare, discuss, but all insist,
"The Man must be a shocking Atheist."
Brother, or Sister, whosoe'er thou art!
Couldst thou but see the Fang that gnaws my Heart,
Thou wouldst forgive this transient Gush of Scorn,
Wouldst shed a Tear, in Pity wouldst thou mourn
For one, who 'spite the Wrongs that lacerate
His weary Soul, has never learnt to hate.

God bless you, my dear Friend, and all those you love: though I perceive, in that case, I am imploring a Blessing upon myself; but there is no Law against it. Am I not vain?

Your affectionate Friend,
J. Blanco White.

Letter from Dr. Tuckerman.

Boston, Oct. 24th, 1837.

My dear Sir,

Among the incidental pleasures of my daughter's return to us from England, one of the greatest was, that of receiving the note from you which she brought to me. I am aware that I am indebted for that note to her solicitation, that you would give me a few lines by her. Still I heartily thank you for it. I had hoped, when I was in Ireland, in the spring of 1834, that I should have seen you at Archbishop Whately's. I had long known you through your writings. But you was then absent. I saw, however, a small marble bust of you, the impression of which is still very distinct upon my mind; and I have great pleasure in having even this association with your countenance. Yours has been a life of peculiarly interesting and instructive changes; and your position now,—mentally I mean,—seems to me to be one upon which I may most heartily congratulate you. What greater, or even what comparative good, is there, or can there be in this world, than the consciousness at once of true intellectual and moral freedom, of increasing light upon the great subjects of God and of humanity, and of having done something, and desired and sought infinitely more, for our own, and the moral advancement of our race? I hope that you will leave for publication such records of yourself as you have not been willing to give during your life. You express your anxiety for America. I am not surprised at this. Yet, in truth, my dear Sir, there is little or no ground for it.

We are acting out here some of the extravagances of freedom. But when I consider through how long a series of generations the human mind has been enslaved, and the world divided between the two classes of the oppressed and the oppressors of our race, and how very partially fitted, from this very circumstance, are more than ninety-nine hundredths of us for either civil or religious freedom, my wonder is, that Society goes on as well as it does. We have occasional outbreaks and excesses, which occasion a loud hue and cry, the echo of which soon reaches you. But you may be assured that intelligence, freedom and virtue, are steadily, though slowly, advancing among us. There is no ground whatever for a fear of a retrograde movement of Society here. The Slave question, from causes well understood here, and but very partially understood in England, has called forth some of the worst expressions of the worst passions of the human heart. But the progress of the question can no more be arrested, than that of time; and the most effective instruments of emancipation will be the Slave-holders, and the most hot-headed advocates of slavery. You will have heard of the determination of this class of our *Republicans* to obtain the annexation of Texas to the Union; and thus, by making ten or a dozen New States, to secure a decided preponderance of slave-holding power in the country. Texas,—I mean as it stands upon the map,—will be the field of long and most angry battles in our Congress next winter. But fear nothing. Should a vote for this object be obtained, the Union will be dissolved; and, as I believe without a doubt, the emancipation of our slaves will thus be greatly hastened. Or, should the South fail in this project, its desperation will be increased; which will, with equal certainty, though not, I think, so soon, be fatal to their cause. Has human society ever been advanced in great principles, but by some great and terrible shaking of its elements? The moral progress of society has, indeed, been very slow. Yet pro-

gress has been made. Christianity has done but little for the world compared with what it seems that it might have done. But still it has done much. Slavery, where it has been abolished, can never again be established in Christian Europe, nor in the Free States of America. The poor and ignorant in your country and my own, are more and more recognized as beings of a common nature with the educated and the rich. England has taken some important steps towards the voluntary principle for the support of religious institutions; and America has given a practical demonstration, not only of its sufficiency, but of its immense advantages for this object. The evils of legalized monopolies in all their forms, and the rights and claims of free trade and commerce, and of free competition in all the departments of industrial enterprise, are better and better understood; and governments are acting more and more wisely upon these great interests. The education of the people, in the best sense, is advancing. Never let us despair of human nature. My long connection with the poor has filled me not only with hope, but with confidence, in respect to this great class. I have a thousand times more painful feelings in respect to the rich and powerful, than to the humbler classes. Great as is the vice to be found among these classes, far greater is the amount of their virtue. My experience among them has brought me to the conviction, that a degree and extent of moral good yet undreamed of is attainable among them, would but the rich suitably demand the proper instruments for it, and co-operate, as they might, for its attainment. But I must stop. I would that I could be near you, and discuss with you the great interests of our common humanity. My term of active service, or of free intercourse with the poor, has gone by. I no longer have strength for it. But the work of the ministry at large is in a very prosperous state here. I have three efficient young colleagues in the service, one of whom is

to be ordained next Sunday evening. The other two were set apart for the work in 1834.

May I not hope to hear from you again? My daughter remembers you with reverential affection. I heartily thank you for your kindness to her. We talk of you, and love you as a friend. We have lately been reading, and greatly enjoying, your "Second Travels of an Irish Gentleman, &c." May God crown your closing days with ever-increasing hope, and peace, and joy in believing! So prays your sincere friend,

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.

From Professor Norton.

Cambridge, (N. E.) Nov. 8th, 1837.

My dear Sir,

I should have acknowledged before, the favour of your last two letters, but have myself been suffering from severe illness during the greater part of the summer, from which I am now slowly recovering. I earnestly hope that your health is restored, and that you may be able to pass the remainder of your useful and honourable life in ease and satisfaction. I beg you to be assured that no difference of opinion, however important, can affect my belief of your fairness of mind and integrity of purpose; and in making a few remarks to explain my own views, I am sure they will be such as will not give you pain.

Opinions I regard as of the greatest importance; for men, when not self-condemned, act as they believe, or endeavour at least to reconcile their actions with their belief, and the whole history of the world is one lesson of the disastrous consequences of different errors of opinion. But a great majority of men, I do not mean of reading and thinking men, but of men, of human beings, are not morally responsible for their opinions. These have been determined for them by circumstances which they could not control.

Whether they are right or wrong is simply a misfortune or an advantage. Even of reading and thinking men, taking the whole class, there are few indeed whose religious belief has, to the same degree with your own, been the result of personal inquiry and reasoning. Most men are incapacitated both for acquiring a full knowledge of the evidence of important truths, and for estimating that evidence correctly, by the prejudices of education, by the circumstances of life, and by the actual want of the intellectual powers required. They believe on authority — through their trust in the good faith, information, and judgment of others; and so we are all of us on many subjects compelled to do. The opinions of the world, so far as they have been determined correctly, have been determined by the gradual progress of information to which many have contributed, by the lessons of experience, and especially by the wisdom and efforts of a very few, the philosophers and guides of others. It is then no argument against any truth, should the fact be admitted, that its evidence is not fully to be apprehended even by the generality of *common readers*, and that those ignorant of the subject may raise doubts and cavils, proceeding perhaps from their very ignorance. The simple question we are to ask ourselves is, whether the evidence be sufficient to establish the truth, and then to contribute our authority towards its reception by giving testimony that, in our opinion, it has been established. There are no truths, not those most intimately connected with virtue and happiness, the evidence of which, however decisive, is so intuitive and unassailable, that we can say, this is evidence by which all must be convinced. The German Theologian, Schleiermacher, so highly reputed among his countrymen, was a pantheist, an admirer of Spinoza, a disbeliever in the personal immortality of man, and denied any connection between religion and morality. Fichte, at one period, taught Atheism, however he might pretend that he recognized a God, in what an English philosopher

might call the moral sense; and Pantheism or Atheism has continued to be a marked characteristic of German metaphysics. In the last century, the sensual philosophy of France denied not only all religion, but attacked all morality, except so far as it might be founded upon self-gratification, the purpose of securing as many of the pleasures of this life as were attainable by an individual. I do not doubt in consequence the satisfactory nature of the evidence of any of the truths denied, because that evidence has not been convincing to the individuals in question. But I am aware that it could not be fully stated, and the subject freed from all misapprehension, perversion, and doubt, without a process of reasoning, which it might require more than common natural power and cultivation of intellect to follow in all its steps.

Religion, in any proper sense of the word, is not an intuitive thing. The history of man, to say nothing of the very nature of the human mind, proves the contrary. Nor can it consist in feelings alone. Our feelings, to have any rational origin or foundation, must refer to objects and facts; and of the existence of these objects and facts we must have proof. To this proof no objection is to be raised *a priori*, that it requires thought and investigation.

You will not, I trust, suspect me of an intention to draw you into a controversy, though I should be much gratified by the communication of your thoughts on any subject. Mrs. Norton begs you to accept her best regards, and I am,

My dear Sir, respectfully and affectionately yours,

ANDREWS NORTON.

To J. S. Mill, Esq.

Liverpool, Nov. 16th, 1837.

My dear Sir,

I never had the remotest suspicion that you had treated my Article with offensive Neglect. I have too much insight into Character to be guilty of such a blunder. Open-hearted, honest people know each other at a Glance; and from the moment I made your acquaintance, I felt and have preserved the Attachment and Trust of an old Friendship towards you. What you communicate to me about the changes in the plan of the Review I had clearly inferred from the Tone of the Numbers which have been published since that change took place. Though I found myself excluded, I assure you most candidly that, far from taking offence at the mere fact of the exclusion, I entered fully into the Spirit of the new Arrangement, acknowledged the Necessity of it, and declared to my Friends here my sense of the improvement which began to appear in the Work. It was not, it is true, the Periodical which you had planned, but it was something better suited to the Wants of the Times. As to the exclusion of my Article, I was perfectly convinced that it was judicious. A word of Explanation would have sufficed to satisfy me; and now that I know why I did not receive that Explanation, I only regret that my Letter to Senior has occasioned to you the trouble of laying before me the whole History of the altered Review. I thank you, nevertheless, from my Heart for the great Kindness of your Letter. * * * I am fully aware that such Articles as I can write cannot produce any Interest among the Readers whom you wish to gain over to the important political Object of the Review. I sincerely declare to you that I am *glad* my last Article was not published. From what I recollect of it, it wanted Unity and Keeping. This is the effect of my total want of Strength;—my Mind flags and hastens to a conclusion before it has thoroughly

worked through the Subject. If, however, at any Time you should conceive that I might be of use in treating any particular Point, or reviewing some Book or other, let me know and I will exert myself.

I must tell you that since the Beginning of the new Plan I have read through every Number. The last is full of Talent. Your two Articles have given me great pleasure, especially that on Armand Carrel. It is (if I may use the Expression) *nourishing* to the Mind; after reading it, one feels morally stronger than before. * *

My Health is very bad. I do not go out at all; my only Enjoyment of Life arises from my Books. I have nevertheless nearly finished the Translation of a Psychology by Fichte, *the Son*. I fear I shall not live to recast it into such a Shape and Language as would make its Publication advisable. At all events I have made myself pretty well acquainted with German Philosophy and its technical Language.

Believe me, with sincere Esteem and Friendship,

Yours ever,

J. Blanco White.

To Miss L——.

22, Upper Stanhope-street, Liverpool,
Nov. 17th, 1837.

My dear Miss L——,

It is a fact that, since, on Mr. Thom's return from L——, I received the agreeable information that Mr. W—— was about to become a member of your family, not a week has passed without my intending to write to you. Congratulation, according to custom, would now be too late; but according to Reason, it should never be considered out of season as long as there is happiness resulting from the event which called forth a friendly sympathy. As I feel, therefore, certain, from what I know of the persons chiefly concerned, that time will only confirm the fair prospects of

their union, I do not hesitate to begin by begging you and Mrs. L—— to believe that, in spite of my long silence, I have taken a most sincere interest in Mr. and Mrs. W——'s marriage.

My experience in regard to orders given here for German books, makes me feel certain that the Hebrew Lexicon which I desired my bookseller to get for you will never come. I advise you to try whether you can obtain it through London.

Your attempt to read Virgil, in order to be able to understand the Latin of Lexicons, does not appear to me well suited to the object. Even if you succeeded in thoroughly understanding the Latin Poet, which I do not expect, unless you made your way through many other Latin writers, you would find yourself a stranger to the modern Latin of Germany. Your opinion of Virgil arises from want of a familiar acquaintance with the Latin tongue, especially with its poetical language. The beauties of Virgil's Poetry are chiefly of *expression*. Nothing can exceed the delicacy of his pencil, the exquisite tenderness of his style. All this must be lost to any one who laboriously endeavours to make out, as it were, the *material* sense. You would probably have been more pleased with the *sentences* of Lucan, though he is infinitely inferior to Virgil. I would never recommend Poetry till very late in the study of a language. If in Hebrew, you had gone through the historical books *once* at least, before you read the Prophets, you would have saved yourself much trouble. I have done so, and feel the advantage. There is another *probable* benefit in this course of biblical reading. I know, from attentive observation, that there are very few, even among Divines, who have read the historical books of the Old Testament *accurately*. If they have gone through them, which is not frequently the case, you will seldom find that they have ever stopt to remove a single difficulty. They take up certain *supposed* results of the narrative, just as the Commentators wish to make them

out. But whoever reads those books with the degree of attention which the study of the original requires, unless he is totally blinded by superstition, will soon be cured of that miserable BIBLIOLATRY which so widely prevails in England. The vague theory of Inspiration could not keep its ground among the thinking part of those who call themselves, and wish really to be, Christians, if the Old Testament were generally studied like any other ancient book. The difficulty which you find in the celebrated passage of Job arises from the inseparable association of certain theological notions with the words of the translation. *Redeemer* is now incurably what Divines have made it. The *Last Day* is of course the Day of Judgment, and so on. Remember, however, as a general rule of interpretation, that such doctrines as that of a general resurrection, had they been *established*, would not have shown themselves in an *insulated* passage; especially in a book, the subject of which invites the mention of such doctrines in almost every verse. This rule is applicable to *Original Sin*, the Trinity, &c. If the Book of Genesis, *such as we have it*, had been as ancient as it is supposed, and had asserted Original Sin, all subsequent books must have been full of that view. *Ecclesiastes* is now believed by the best critics to be of a very late date. But a thorough study of the origin and history of these books requires a whole life, as well as high accomplishments. My conclusion from this fact is simple enough. Can the acceptance of those books, as unquestionable oracles, be demanded by God as a previous condition of Christianity? Such Christianity must entirely depend upon the infallible authority of a Church—as the Roman Catholics urge with very popular effect.

I have not read any thing of Dr. Wiseman. He is a native of Seville, the son of an Irishman, a friend of my family, whom I knew very well.

Yours ever sincerely,

J. BLANCO WHITE.

P.S. I have been much worse for many months. I had lately a severe attack of fever. My bodily weakness is so great that I never go out of the house; and yet people say that I do not look very ill. I thank God that I can read, and even *write*, which, though more exhausting, I can still manage to indulge in.

To Dr. Channing.

Liverpool, Nov. 30th, 1837.

My dear Sir,

Day by day, since I received your interesting letter of September 10th, have I been trying to find time and strength to acknowledge your kindness; but I had been consulted by a friend upon a subject which required a detailed and pretty long answer; and as I cannot exert the *active* thought required for composition beyond an hour and a half or two hours a-day, I constantly found myself totally exhausted at the end of my task, and was obliged to put off the intended and really wished-for answer to you. Yesterday morning I did finish the Notes, which I had been collecting, and to-day I gladly take the pen to address you.

Let men talk of Physico-Theologies, and Demonstrations of the Existence and Personality of God, as they please; to me, the only satisfactory, soul-filling proof of that sublime truth, is the human Mind, as I observe it wonderfully at work in such intellectual and moral communication as it is my happiness to hold with you and a few other friends. We do not know each other externally, and yet how surprisingly do our thoughts and our most spiritual feelings (we have no better name) meet and strengthen each other! Distance vanishes, and we find ourselves together, imparting and receiving hopes which raise us above the actual condition of humanity, whilst, without the labour of any logical deduction, we feel fully convinced that supreme Love and Wisdom lead, though mysteriously, the mighty, but

changeful concerns of this world. I have enjoyed this highest of all gratifications whilst reading your letter on Texas, which Mr. Thom had the goodness to lend me. I read it without interruption, and, I may add, without any consciousness of fatigue. It is a noble moral Protest against political Profligacy—the last sin which men are likely to acknowledge as such, and renounce; for when acting in bodies, the individuals have a tempting opportunity of shifting their own responsibility upon all the rest; the result of which is a moral Monster endowed with the collective power of all, and without a particle of the conscience of each. Your Letter, I am convinced, will find an echo in every honest heart, not only in the *sound* part of America, but wherever the English language is understood. It will, besides, I am willing to believe, have practical consequences beneficial to the great people of whom you are one. The vigour of its youth is leading it astray from the path of virtue, tempting it to do every thing that seems to promote the tangible and material interests of the moment; and unless a powerful voice—the voice of the Deity himself, through the unperverted conscience of those who love Him—should startle the unthinking and the profligate, and call the energies of the upright into action, there might be a fearful check on the part of the now insulted laws of our common humanity. But I fully expect that, when roused into activity, the millions among you who are still worthy of their republican liberty, will be able, without resorting to violence, to bring their deluded brethren of the South to a clear sense of their duty.

I fear that my *Memoirs* will be understood but by few. I have written them at different periods, and as my mind has been constantly in a state of transition, the colouring of the language must necessarily want consistency. But even this circumstance may help such as have the power of reading in other men's souls, to penetrate more deeply into the internal work, the long process that has been going on

within me for many, many years. One important thing will after all be evident: it will be seen that if my WILL had been allowed to prevail, that Will, with its affections, would have fixed me on the side of conformity with Church Authority. The ground of that propensity is a strong love of sympathy implanted in my nature. Whatsoever prejudices I have had, were certainly on the side which I have quitted. But not a shadow of that tendency remains at present.

I had, not long ago, the pleasure of a conversation with your colleague, Mr. Gannet, and his Lady. My residence in Liverpool has made me acquainted with several of your countrymen and countrywomen. The latter, especially, have increased the good opinion which I had theoretically formed of the moral and intellectual effects of your political state *in the North*. Books of Travels are seldom to be trusted; the author's wish is to be *striking*; even at the expense of correctness; and, what is as bad, they all see things through their own prejudices. I have lately read a sort of novel—*Marie, ou l'Esclavage*, by M. de Beaumont. In the Notes, which are confined to what the author deems naked facts, there is the most absurd account of the state of religion in America: the description of Unitarianism is almost ludicrous. The author does *you* justice, only that he could not conceive how a Unitarian can be a Christian. It is impossible for a Frenchman, believer or unbeliever, to separate Christianity from Popery.

Believe me, with sincere esteem and friendship,

Yours ever truly,

J. BLANCO WHITE.

Liverpool, Dec. 2nd, 1837.

The distressing Case of an industrious Cabinet-Maker, frequently employed by me, is one of the ten thousand instances of this kind, which occur in this country, and prove that the Poor are left quite un-

protected by the Law. We hear many high-sounding Assertions of the Equality of all Classes before the Law—but nothing can be more evident than that such Equality is only true in Theory. The Expensiveness and Complication of the Law, as it is administered, put it entirely out of the Poor Man's reach, when he wants it for his own Protection. Much of the *personal* Liberty enjoyed by English subjects belongs exclusively to the *worst Class of them*: a Man or Woman, who loses all sense of Self-Respect and Shame enjoys in England a vast privilege of Mischief. Such Individuals may destroy the Peace and Comfort of those whom they may wish to annoy, without the possibility of a legal Remedy. A wealthy and influential Man, who can fee an able or crafty Lawyer, may, after considerable trouble and expense, abate the Nuisance; but People in humbler circumstances must submit to it. The *injurious Person* is a particular object of the Law's Tenderness. In him the Freedom of the Subject is respected; for *Freedom* is understood in an *active* Sense; the Freedom to be quiet, seems scarcely to exist in the Eye of the Law. This is particularly true in subjects of mere Police: any one who sets up a Nuisance, may be sure that he has two-thirds of the Law on his side, especially, (as it must generally be the case,) if *Magistrate's* Law has to decide.

The Poor Man whose troubles suggest these observations, has a desperate drunken Virago to his Wife. Fearing, as he declares, for his Life, he quitted his House, and proposed a Maintenance to

his domestic Fury. But she had other Views; she wished to ruin him; she withdrew the Furniture and sold it; broke the windows, only that her husband should have to pay for them to the Landlord; borrowed money in his Name, and whenever any one called to give him employment, she told him people were wrong in employing a Villain. Now she follows the unfortunate man in the streets, throws stones at him, and is determined to weary him out of his Life. When the Man observed that the Furniture was disappearing, he cautioned the associate of his Wife who was employed in absconding it, that he would have him taken up as a Thief: and finding him, after this warning, with some Articles upon his person, he committed him to Bridewell. Whether this was or was not the properest Measure, I am not able to say; but much less could an uneducated Man form a correct notion of the course he ought to pursue. He could not pay for legal Advice, and probably acted as some ignorant person desired him. The case was to be heard two Days ago, and the poor Man, in great Distress—(for he assured me that his Heart ached at having been obliged to charge his Wife's Accomplice with Theft)—came to ask that I would give him a Note to the Mayor, attesting a general good character—which I did. The case, of course, was dismissed by Mr. H——, (the Mayor was too late to be present,) but that Gentleman did not content himself with non-suiting the injured Husband: he would also have a Joke against him. "He laughed at me, Sir,"—said the Man, with great

simplicity, "and told me that if my Wife broke my Head, I might come to him for a Plaister." If, as I believe, this information is correct, I cannot well express my indignation at such an unbecoming levity. But from everything I have been able to collect relative to Police Magistrates, it seems that they generally acquire something of the Tone of the Persons who most frequently come before them. The London Reports of the Police Offices are quite disgusting in that respect: it seems as if the Magistrates wished to impress upon the Rogues and Vagabonds, that though there is a Necessity now and then to send a few of them to the Tread-Mill, their Tricks are amusing, and their Impudence (if not directed against the Worshipful Bench) appears in the eyes of its occupant, in the light of Spirit and Manliness. A Plaintiff, who betrays shyness or awkwardness, is almost invariably a subject of Magisterial Sport.

Well then, to return to my Case: the Law has no Remedy within the reach of my poor Cabinet Maker, and he is not bad enough to apply a stout stick as a Family Prescription. Who knows whether Mr. H—— would be inclined to give the Wife a Liniment, or whether he might think of the House of Correction for the Husband? What, then, if harrassed, distressed, disturbed in his occupation, this Man was to take to Drinking?—Who cares for that? One poor Man more would sink; but neither his moral Loss, nor that of thousands in his Rank of Life, is sufficiently felt to give a moment's uneasiness to the Wealthy Classes.—Is this too severe a

Statement?—I wish I were mistaken. I acknowledge with Sympathy the Exertions of Benevolence which are made by the better Classes, but cannot conceal from myself that most of those Exertions arise from a Desire to soothe themselves—to remove the painful Impression which the Mass of Misery and Crime, of which they cannot but hear some Reports and behold a few Specimens, make upon Hearts generally abounding with the best Feelings of Humanity, but wanting the moral Discipline which converts mere Sympathies into Virtues. Their Exertions are usually confined to the comparatively easy Matter of giving away a Guinea; but the Sacrifice of Time and Ease is too painful for them; and the Thought, Inquiry, and Reflection, without which Benevolence is *universally* mischievous, quite overwhelming to their ill-trained, half-dreaming, or merely sauntering Minds.

Extensively as the Spirit of Association has been applied in this Country for benevolent Purposes, I nevertheless conceive that this powerful moral Instrument is frequently employed without proper Discrimination. Enthusiastic and Party Feeling are constantly misdirecting and, in a considerable Degree, discrediting it. We want to see it used without Bustle and Display, especially in favour of the poorer Classes. The Case which I have above stated suggests to me the advisableness of forming Societies, in Towns like Liverpool, whose Object should be that of giving MORAL AND LEGAL ADVICE TO THE MEMBERS OF THE WORKING CLASSES, and of petty Trades. I

cannot conceive a more effectual Method of befriending the industrious Poor, than that of taking a visible Interest in their Troubles and Difficulties, and imparting to them such Portions of Knowledge as they are most in want of, and which they cannot acquire otherwise than by verbal communication. The FRIENDLY Advice of an educated Man, given when the Poor may most perceive its Usefulness, would be more powerful than any Lectures that can be given at the Mechanics' Institutes.

A single moral Principle explained and applied to a poor Man's present Difficulties, would raise him in the intellectual Scale, by an Impulse which his Soul, unpractised in Thought, might be inclined to regard as almost supernatural. No Instruction, especially in moral points, can have the least effect, unless the Mind for which it is intended, feels a degree of Thirst after it;—a State into which our Spirit must at first be stimulated by external wants, not to be supplied by mere Externals. To make a poor Man perceive the importance and sacredness of moral and civil Rights, he must feel his own in danger. Instruction, in that case, will be received with Avidity, dwelt upon with Interest, and converted into spiritual Nourishment.—But I must briefly state the general character of the Institution which I wish to recommend. If the mere Idea of it should not be deemed fanciful, the practical details would easily be added to my rough and general Sketch, by such as are versed in such Matters.

The Association I propose should have for its object the Establishment of a COURT OF FRIENDLY ADVICE. For difficult cases, it should have an able and respectable Lawyer to assist it. It should annually appoint six of its most respectable Members, virtuous, practical Men, well-known for clearness of Head and soundness of Judgment: any two should make a *quorum*, and compose a friendly Court of Equity. Any individual of the working classes, who might be in want of Advice, should have the liberty of asking it at stated Hours. To save unnecessary Attendance to the Members of the Board, for the time being, a Secretary, resident in the House of the Society, might, at the request of the Party or Parties wanting Advice, give Notice to the Board that the Services at least of two of them would be required the next Day. These Individuals would hear the *ex parte* Statement, and, if possible, endeavour to induce the other Person concerned to come before them. In a Word, they should act as a *Court of Umpires*, and according to the SPIRIT in which the Sessions for the Peace originated, but which Magistrates who can employ Compulsion, and whose Hearts are flattered by the exercise of Power, cannot maintain for any length of time.

The Defects of the present unpaid Magistracy arise chiefly from the incompatible Mixture of the Ideas of FRIENDLY Interference, and legal Compulsion, which are attempted to be combined in the Office of Justice of the Peace. The Poor want the Advice

(which they cannot obtain from the Police Magistrates) and the MORAL Authority of Men, to whom they may spontaneously apply, and to whose Judgment they may or may not submit. In a Multitude of cases they want Judges, armed with no other weapons than those of Persuasion.

As an Apology for what, to many, will appear as a Day-Dream of an Old Recluse, I must add that of the early Institutions of Rome in the time of its moral Vigour; none breathes a more wise and benevolent Spirit than that according to which the Patricians employed themselves at the earliest Dawn of Day, in explaining the Law, and giving moral Advice to their Clients among the Plebeians. A more noble occupation cannot be conceived: it almost reconciles the Mind to the otherwise exorbitant Privileges of the Roman Nobility.

To J. S. Mill, Esq.

Liverpool, December 15th, 1837.

My dear Sir,

Your parcel has just been delivered at my door. Only my strong desire to thank you for your valuable present of the Œdipus Judaicus can excuse me for troubling you with a letter. It is a very great kindness in you to part with so rare a book. I accept it with every feeling of friendship for the donor.

I wish I had known your wishes respecting the Article in the last Quarterly, for I should have been able to write more to the Point. But I will get the Number as soon as I can,

and study it through. If you have received my Notes, you will have seen that I entertain a strong suspicion of a Pious Conspiracy extending from Germany to England. Pusey, in his better days, visited Germany, and made several acquaintances among the German Divines. At that time he was bitten with *Rationalism*, and perhaps you will remember that he came forward against Rose, the champion of English Orthodoxy. Newman is a real enthusiast; I do not believe that Pusey deserves that name, though I should be sorry to believe him a Hypocrite. But the Mysteries of Churchism are inscrutable. The Oxford Society of Saints have for some time been publishing a collection of Tracts called *Tracts for the Times*. Newman, Pusey, and Keble, the simple-hearted Poet, have been the chief contributors. The aim of the whole collection is to restore Popery, excluding the Pope. Fasting, the use of the Cross, the keeping of Saints' Days, and Lent, are strongly recommended. These practices are becoming pretty general. The Saints have undertaken Translations of the Works of the Fathers. I have a detailed Prospectus of the intended Work, but have not been able to ascertain whether any publication has taken place already. I have no doubt that they will be able to do immense mischief. That portion of the English Mind upon which they build, has closed itself against every source of light, which might save the country from this deception. People send their children to Oxford, because it is *Oxford*, not caring a straw what kind of education they receive there. These young men are soon after sent out over the face of the country, in a state of rabid Toryism, and still more rabid Saintship. It is the combination of these two spirits that, in my opinion, threaten this country with a most dangerous reaction against that small portion of the Spirit of the Age which has been at work among us.

I thank you for the trouble you have taken to send back poor Seelman's MSS. He has been dead many months, and

it was indeed happy for the old man to get out of a life of trouble and poverty.

With sincere esteem and friendship,
I am, my dear Sir, yours ever truly,
J. Blanco White.

Dec. 16th.

In bed the whole day; wretchedly ill; and awake in pain all night.

17th.

Got up, and scraped together a few lines of a translation of Fichte. Desultory reading by snatches. Went to Bed with a most furious cough; my pulse at 104. Opium made me sleep.

18th.

Very ill. Began a Letter to the President of the Domestic Mission Society.

To William Rathbone, Esq.

22, Upper Stanhope-street,
December 21, 1837.

My dear Sir,

In proportion to the satisfaction I enjoyed in being one of those who took an active part in the first Meeting of our "Domestic Mission Society," is the regret with which I find myself compelled, by my daily growing infirmities, not to appear at the second Meeting. I trust that, knowing, as you do, the deep interest I take in our Society, you will acquit me of intrusion when I am about to take the liberty of stating to you the leading impressions which the Report * of our worthy Minister has left upon my mind.

[* First Annual Report to the Liverpool Domestic Mission Society, by their Minister to the Poor, the Rev. J. Johns.]

Taking what has been already done, as a whole, and comparing it with the collective mass of obstacles which stood in our way, I rejoice to be able to say, that our progress is cheering. In my view of the subject, the greatest difficulties with which we had to contend, were the *established Prejudices*, from which we could not expect to find the minds of even the very best men, among whom we were to choose our Minister, quite free. That most excusable, one might say *amiable* error—Blind benevolence, which at all times will threaten Ruin to our Undertaking, could not but be more or less in possession of a Man who should be ready to step among the scenes of Misery and Woe to which his Ministry was directed. And surely a person, who had never fallen into that practical Error, would raise my suspicion of his being totally unfit to go among the wretched Poor as a friend. The fittest Messenger, in my opinion, is he who, having originally given up his Heart to the amiable delusion, that Poverty and Misery can be removed by Alms, has a sufficient strength of Mind to perceive his mistake, and to act as Reason and Experience direct, though doing violence to his feelings. The candour of our good and benevolent Minister has put us in possession of the important Fact, that he is exactly in the circumstances which I have described. Now my greatest fear has been removed. I find that our Minister has been daily gaining strength against the soft and almost irresistible voice of mere animal sympathy, and therefore I feel confident that our *moral Experiment* is carried on, on proper grounds, and that, if we ourselves submit to the same discipline, and do not spoil our own work by haste and inconsiderateness, we may rest assured that we have established what may be a source of great Good to future Generations.

I highly approve of the Principle, as it now bursts out (p. 7 of the Report) with spontaneous growth, out of a daily Experience to which a candid Mind could not possibly close itself. " I have had it still more deeply at Heart, (says

our Minister) to induce my poor People to *help themselves*." To this simple Method, the whole Art and Science of doing Good to Mankind is exclusively reduced. The human Being who does not sincerely wish to *help himself*, will always be the worse for any external Help. I need not guard against the absurd construction of supposing, that I apply that great Principle to such as Nature has already rendered helpless. Our Minister shows excellent discrimination on that Point. When Life is in extreme Danger from external Wants, Humanity imperiously demands that the poorest individual may (if possible) be snatched out of the grasp of Death. But in all cases whatever, every hope should be removed that the granted Relief can be permanent; every expectation of some Chance-gain in Money or Valuables from the kind Visitor of the Poor, must be mercilessly strangled in its growth.—The Reason is clear: the moral truth and strength with which a person in the lower Ranks of Life might *help himself*, is wasted and degraded by such low cunning, truly beggarly side-views to Gain: they are absolutely inseparable from Hypocrisy.

Another Principle nearly allied to the former, but which, owing to the perverted Maxims of an ascetic Morality, is little attended to, is this: the only Root of Moral Reform is revived *Self-Respect*. In spite of Misconduct, especially when Vice has not yet become a second Nature, the blessed seed of Self-Respect—the Respect due to that Light of God within us, which makes us rational Beings, may still be found unchoked. I am inclined to say that to seek out such Individuals in order to keep the sacred spark alive in them, is the truest Abstract of the Purposes, the Efforts, the ardent Wishes of this Society.—Shall it be necessary to stop the clamour of Bigots and Enthusiasts, by a proper mixture of technical Phrases about Grace and previous Help? I should not feel sure of my Reverence for Him "in whom we live and move, and have our being," if at every turn of Phrase, I introduced some school maxim, lest it might be

thought that I made Man's soul independent from God. But we are here concerned, not with theological Theories, but with the practical study of God's own Laws, according to which the human Mind, when degraded from its Dignity, may be roused to the Exertion necessary for the Recovery of its natural Rank.

I have already intruded too long upon you, and yet important subjects crowd into my mind, all springing from various parts of the Report. Our Minister has most distinctly expressed his own true conception of the character of his office. He wishes to be known among the Poor as a friend. Oh! that there were many who took appropriate pains to establish that character among the Unhappy! But we must not expect too much: it is impossible to appear as a *friend* to souls, themselves too selfish and low to know what friendship is. There is an immense difficulty in making most individuals of the uneducated classes conceive, that a *Gentleman* who gives them no money, can be their friend. But it is well worth labouring among a multitude of selfish wretches, for the sake of discovering a single person, man or woman, who can make the distinction between pecuniary bounty, and sincere, brotherly goodwill.

I heartily join in the wish of our Minister, to have a Room where he may assemble the best disposed among his Poor; but I deprecate every thing that might give to such a place the formality of a chapel. Useful reading; Conversation upon what has been read, if any one present should feel inclined to put a question; Prayer, but not at stated times, which would soon turn it into a mere ceremony;—in a word, *friendly intercourse* with the best disposed, in a Room devoted to such a purpose, could not fail to increase our Minister's powers for good.

I must now close these detached expressions of my hopes, and my ulterior views, respecting our Society. I need not excuse myself to you, by mentioning that I have been writing under severe illness. Though my thoughts must want

development and connection, I feel certain that you will find no difficulty as to their general meaning. The prominent result, in my mind, cannot be better expressed than in the words of our excellent Minister, "I have felt (he says) a calm and growing conviction, that *good is doing* in the dreary agency which has been assigned to me." Had we heard early boastings of moral Miracles among the poor, I should totally have despaired. But I recognize the voice of Nature and Truth in the modest words which I have quoted.

With my individual thanks to you, for your exertions during the time of your Presidency, and most ardent prayers to God for a full and beneficial development of our Society,

I have the honour to be, my dear Sir,

Your sincere friend and servant,

JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE.

22nd.

At half past two the Archbishop of Dublin and Edward came: they staid till a quarter to four.

To Professor Norton.

Liverpool, Dec. 28th, 1837.

My dear Sir,

Your letter of 8th Nov. last found me confined to my bed with a very severe attack of my habitual complaint. I was so ill that I could not read, even for a few minutes; the letter was therefore left unopened till the following day, when, in spite of the utmost weakness and dejection, I can assure you it gave me very great pleasure. I have so seldom met with *practical* toleration, that the unquestionable instance of it which I find in yourself will be a source of comfort and satisfaction to me as long as I live. My love of veracity has put you to a severe trial, out of which your tolerant spirit has come unruffled, and perfectly self-pos-

sessed. We differ on most essential points; but you allow me full liberty without a grudge, without the least diminution of esteem and friendship. I thank God that I have found you so perfectly true to the great principles, to the promotion of which I have devoted my life, and for the sake of which I am slowly and painfully sinking into the grave, without a domestic friend to speak a soothing word to me in the midst of my anguish. Yet I do not in the least regret the determination of which I am now experiencing the bitterest consequences.

There is unquestionably a great deal of misdirected activity in the German world of mind; but we are nevertheless indebted to it for very important results, the fruits of patient thought and investigation. The tendency which you observe to Pantheism, I consider as inevitable. In regard to the Deity, our mind is necessarily placed between the extremes of Idolatry (in the broadest etymological sense of εἰδωλον) and of Pantheism, or Identification of God with the World. But the notion of an extra-mundane Deity is so contradictory, that no sooner does the human intellect become its own master, than we are compelled to cast off the Anthropomorphitical God, as we would a material idol; for indeed such a God is *material*, i. e. is made up of elements which the imagination borrows from the material world. Then begin the enlarged but indistinct conceptions of a pervading power. Even St. Paul, a Jew whose religion takes the lead in the various modifications of the God-idol, breaks out into expressions directly tending to Pantheism: "In him we live and move and have our being." In fact, Pantheism is the form of the improving and reflecting mind. Both systems are necessarily in close connection with gross errors; but I think the coarsest Pantheism less mischievous than the most refined *Idolatry*, which is the parent of Superstition, Fanaticism, Priesthoods, &c. The great thing is to preserve the conviction of the separate personality of the Deity, of its being the eternal self-con-

sciousness. This must be done by the religious Pantheist on the ground of his own consciousness, which being the greatest of all realities, possesses at the same time the most unquestionable evidence of its not being primitive. The admiration of Spinoza's philosophical powers will grow. It is evident that his whole system is founded upon the erroneous principle, that the consequences of a subjective definition (such as that of substance) must have objective validity. But the work is a wonderful piece of reasoning.

I have not yet been relieved from the last severe attack: the fever does not entirely leave me, and here I am writing as it were in a dream, under a feeling of fainting which attends every thing I do. I am convinced that death would be a blessing to me; but I trust in the great and good Power who gave me life, that he will resume his gift when it is fittest.

My best regards to Mrs. Norton. I beg you to accept my best thanks for the great satisfaction I now enjoy, that difference of opinion has not, and will not, deprive me of your friendship.

Yours ever most truly,
J. Blanco White.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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